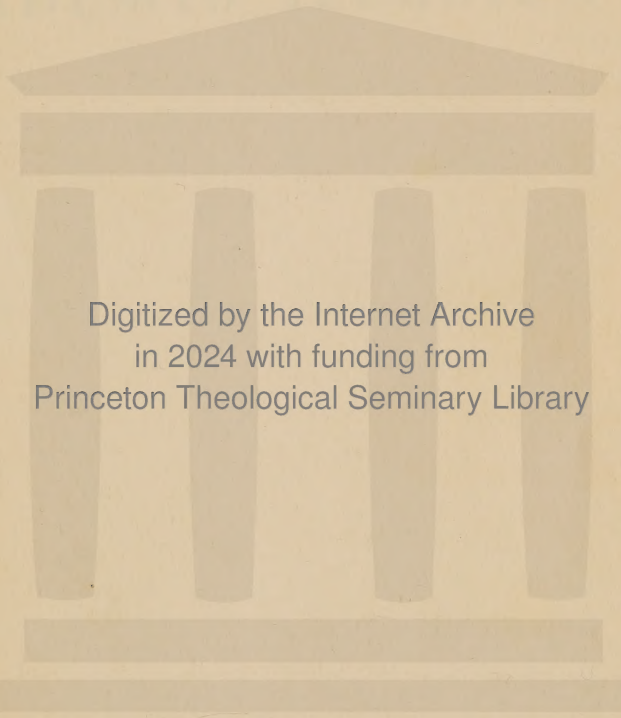
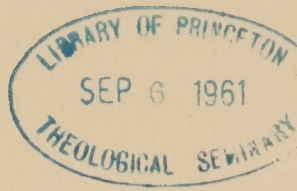


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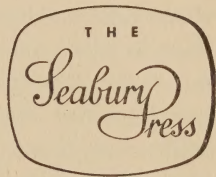
ACADEMIC ILLUSION



ACADEMIC ILLUSION

DENIS BALLY

FOREWORD BY THE RT. REV. STEPHEN F. BAYNE, JR.



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Foreword

This is a book for those who love the University for what it is. Selfconscious, nervous times like ours breed perilous misconceptions and untrue affections about the University. We peer at it anxiously, suspiciously; or we idolize it. We seek to chain it to our present society, or fear that it is not chained, as if it were designed to be solely the servant or the executor of a given society and its ideas. We praise it or accuse it as we feel it succeeds in producing citizens who will accommodate themselves comfortably to that society. We ask of it that it be an efficient and safe and non-controversial process through which men and women may pass, to become successful answers to the Soviet system or whatever.

These are all idolatries or sentimentalities, born out of insecurity and the loss of any adequate theological perspectives within which to set the University. Like all such things, they are ghosts of truth—the University is something, by God's appointment, which can be distorted or half-remembered and so engender such idolatries and sentimentalities. The University is, indeed, one of the cardinal ways in which a society reproduces itself, its knowledge, its techniques, its standards of judgment. And when a society is unsure of itself and does not know the things which belong to its peace, then the cardinal processes of that society also lose their true form and function and are debased, keeping only shadowy vestiges of their real nature. These vestiges are the "illusions" of which Mr. Baly writes.

The book, I repeat, is for those who love the University for what

it essentially is. It will give no more comfort to the timid or the conventional than most things Denis Baly writes. The secularized reader will be annoyed by much of it and mystified by much more. The conventional Churchman who hopes to restore a lost "churchiness" to the University will not like the book either, I'm afraid. What would he make of such a sentence as this: "Men must be allowed to do their worst if they are to be saved, and the loyal but craven Christian on the campus who holds that the Faith is too sacred for inquiry destroys it more surely than the atheist who attacks it"?

But my point is that neither the secularized nor the merely pious can really love the University for what it is. I doubt myself if anybody can love it enough to criticize it wisely and support it steadily, who does not see it as it is in the intent and providence of God. For the whole enterprise of learning—the truth to be learned, the minds that can learn it, the use that truth is finally to the minds who learn it, the standards by which that use and those minds and the learning itself is judged—all this complex is likely to be no more than a sorrow and a torment if it is not seen as of God's providing, and received and used as his gift.

And to see the University in this grandest setting is to open it to disquieting judgment and restless unease, to far more radical analysis than the mere discomforts and hurt prides and proprietary jealousies which form so large a part of the malaise which Mr. Baly describes. I must confess, as one who means truly to love the University, that I have been profoundly moved, even shocked, by the implications of some of the things he has written. Having had the privilege of reading it in manuscript, I had time to grow out of that first despair into a genuinely welcoming warmth. But there is deep surgery here—questions which awake roughly, a certain relentlessness which rightly goes with the vision of God—which doubtless is the cost of love. More, it may be the saving of the University.

STEPHEN F. BAYNE, JR.

Preface

This book is offered, I hope with humility, but certainly with diffidence, as a contribution towards the understanding of what has come to be called in some circles "the university question." To venture to write upon so vast a topic, and about a community which claims the whole of knowledge as its concern, must always be a frightening and a humbling task, and could never be attempted without the advice, counsel and support of people in disciplines other than one's own. If there is any value in what is said in these pages, it comes from the fact that this support and counsel has been available to me at every turn.

The book began in a series of lectures which I was asked to give, in November 1956, to the second annual Episcopal Faculty Conference at Orleton Farms, London, Ohio. The topic of these lectures was "The Biblical Faith and the Presuppositions of Modern Education," and the result of the discussions at this conference was a decision to work towards a book upon the subject. A first draft of this book was written, and about four hundred copies were distributed to faculty in various disciplines, to graduate students, to undergraduates, and to college clergy, for comment and for criticism. This was given in the form of written material, and at a large number of meetings and discussions. Chief among these was the third Episcopal Faculty Conference of Ohio, in November 1957, which was admirably led by Professor John Coleman of the University of Toronto. At this conference this first draft was exhaustively dissected.

At the fourth conference, in November 1958, at which the material was discussed again, though rather more briefly, it was decided that the second draft, then in preparation, should be criticized by the following people, to whose careful and thoughtful advice I am more indebted than I can possibly say:—

The Rt. Rev. Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., then Bishop of Olympia.

Prof. John Coleman, Dept. of Mathematics, University of Toronto.

Prof. David L. Anderson, Dept. of Physics, Oberlin College.

Prof. Thomas B. Cameron, Dept. of Chemistry, University of Cincinnati.

Prof. Raymond English, Dept. of Political Science, Kenyon College.

Prof. Gerrit Roelofs, Dept. of English, Kenyon College.

Prof. William Kerr, Dept. of History, Wesleyan University.

Prof. Wolfgang Zucker, Dept. of Philosophy, Upsala College.

It will be seen that they represent different disciplines and, it should be added, several different denominations. The present work is the third draft, which has been prepared on the basis of their criticisms.

And not of theirs only. Gratitude requires, but space, alas, forbids, me to mention a large number of other people, faculty, administration and students, who have read all, or part, of the manuscript and have given me the benefit of their advice. I cannot possibly mention them all by name and must thank them collectively, though sincerely. I should, however, record my gratitude for the unfailing support and interest of the President of Kenyon College, Dr. Franz Edward Lund, who has taken time out of a very busy life to read both drafts and has discussed them with me extensively. Also, I should like to thank very warmly indeed the large number of students who have read the manuscript, and who have been ready to take the kind of intellectual trouble for which faculty do not always give them credit. Their advice has been always helpful.

Finally, I must express my appreciation of the confidence placed in me by the Bishops of Ohio, and of Southern Ohio, and the Church Society for College Work, for it was under the auspices of all three that this study was first put in hand.

This has been a long catalog of assistance, and rightly so. It was decided that the book should be written by one man, and so I wrote it. Its value, however, lies in the fact that the ideas came from very many people. None of them must be blamed for its faults; they, I fear, are my own.

DENIS BALY

Kenyon College,
September 29, 1960

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ACADEMIC ILLUSION

The Crisis in the Classroom

One does not need to be very long on a campus these days to realize that all is not well. It is not easy to define this malaise exactly, and it must not be exaggerated. For all the complaints made against it, the academic world remains about the most stimulating and exciting atmosphere in which one can live, and only those who know its joys can truly understand the abiding satisfaction which it steadily provides for its inhabitants. To criticize adversely so rich and profitable a society seems at times like treachery. Nevertheless, there are widespread signs of sickness, and these are confined neither to one group of colleges nor even to this country. They show themselves among the students in such things as excessive drinking, or a general apathy to campus activities; among the faculty possibly in querulousness about housing and salaries, and in places in a sort of running fight with the administration. These, however, are only symptoms of a deeper and more general frustration.

In examining this frustration it would seem wise to begin with the classroom, which must always be the heart of the academic activity. However a college or university develops, as long as it may properly be called an "institution of higher learning," it will never cease to be a teaching institution, and the principal relationship to be that between the teacher and the taught. It is, therefore, disturbing to find that the teacher and the taught are not en-

tirely happy with each other. Of the two the teachers are usually the more articulate, and they accuse the student of being both mentally and technically quite unprepared for the task he has to do. They say that he arrives at college with few of the skills which are essential to the process of learning, that he can neither read nor write his mother tongue, that he has had at most two years of a foreign language and often none at all, that he has been given only the most elementary knowledge of mathematics, and a pathetically meager understanding of the physical sciences. They say that his vocabulary is so limited that he can often not follow a lecture, that there are frightening gaps in his knowledge, that he does not know how his own country is governed, and still less does he know even the most basic facts about any other land. In a country with enormous international responsibilities freshmen seem to come to the Political Science department as from a swamp of ignorance, and there is hardly any college or university today which does not have to insist on a course in Freshman English for all entering students.

Faculty accusations, however, do not stop there. They claim further that the average college student arrives with little urge to study, and no knowledge of how to begin even if the urge exists. They say that he does not know how to use a library, how to take notes, how to organize his ideas in an essay, and how to balance one argument against another. According to them, he is content merely to read the assignment and to hand back in a test the classroom material almost word for word. They say that he has neither questioned it nor even thought seriously about it, and that examinations have become no more than the vomiting forth of undigested matter.

In response to this barrage of criticism students usually retort that if they are guilty of such things, it is because this is what is expected of them. They say that an immense number of their instructors require no more than a knowledge of the textbook, and that to question the professor's statements, or even at times to supplement them

in a test or essay, is a dangerous proceeding. Any conversation with students on this matter reveals a firm conviction that independent thought is not desired, and that the professor is likely to be so threatened by any departure from the classroom material that a student who ventures to disagree with him is asking for a low grade. They claim that many of their instructors never vary their lectures from year to year, that students are never taught to write an essay but are given instead an increasing number of objective tests. If accused of looking for easy courses, they insist that the college almost requires it of them, for so rigid is the grading system, and so inescapable the vise of the cumulative average upon which scholarships are often made to depend, that no one in his senses would run the risk of taking a tough course which he did not have to take.

Their chief accusation appears to be one of plain bad teaching, by which they mean that it is uninspired and dull, that it is too often a mere inculcation of facts, that so far from requiring original thought from his students, the instructor shows little original thought himself, and is content to accept the views of the textbook, which, they say, may even be a product of his own that they themselves are forced to buy. Many claim that the professor is not really interested in teaching, that he does not even know the names of his students, that he does not concern himself with any difficulties they may have in understanding the subject. Complaints are frequent of tests and term papers being returned with a grade on them, but no indication of why the grade was given. Also, it is said that there are far too many tests and quizzes, that some instructors display their power by testing on mere irrelevant detail, that others require students to keep rigidly to the assigned reading, though they themselves have allowed the classwork to slip so far behind that the assignments listed at the beginning of the semester are well ahead of the material being studied in class. Students in some colleges say that the final grade is only an artificial mathematical calculation from the number of tests and quizzes given, and makes no allowance for progress made, and they

say of some instructors that any failure to hand in a paper on time, whatever may be the reason, results in an automatic lowering of the grade, regardless of the quality of the paper.

Now clearly, any catalog of this kind must provoke the retort that it is unfair, and so it certainly is. The student who never attends an inspiring course is unlucky above his fellows, and the professor who never receives any first-class work probably has only himself to blame. It is a serious mistake to accuse either the faculty or the student body in their entirety of not doing their job, when quite manifestly numbers of them do it very faithfully. Nevertheless, such excellence is not the common pattern.

Of course, it may fairly be objected that excellence, by its very nature, must be the exception, and that one can never demand it of the majority. Yet the alarming feature seems to be, not that the majority do not attain excellence, but that they have ceased to strive for it. The outstanding teacher and the brilliant student are not merely exceptions; they seem in opposition to much of their society. Brilliance must always be exceptional, but there is no harm in this if the brilliant serve to illumine and inspire a society which has brilliance as its aim; the academic tragedy of today appears to be that in far too many institutions the brilliant exceptions by their very presence disturb a society which not only distrusts brilliance, but is often afraid of it. Far too many students and faculty seem to shrink by instinct from the "clash of mind upon mind," because they fear that in such a clash they will be worsted.

The Betrayal of the Academic Purpose

There is, it must be admitted, at least sufficient truth in the accusations which faculty and students make against each other to require that they be seriously considered. Such consideration suggests that the accusations are not made at random, but form part of a coherent whole, of a general accusation whereby each

accuses the other of treachery, that is of destroying the whole purpose of education by offering a counterfeit in place of the true metal they had contracted to provide. On the one hand, complaints made by the faculty about the "anti-intellectualism" of the students miss the mark if the faculty themselves are not prepared to admit that many of the students they so accuse feel themselves to have been cheated. Students are seldom articulate, but their criticisms are both real and shrewd. They are perfectly well aware that from their point of view what they are paying for is instruction, and they resent any failure to provide the instruction they think they ought to have. They do not normally resent being required to attend classes as such, because they believe that is what primarily they have come for, but they resent beyond measure being required to attend what they consider to be dishonest classes. They dislike the whole paraphernalia of taking attendance, because they suspect it of being used as a crutch and a defense for the bad teacher. They know from experience that the good teacher can dispense with the register. This resentment and frustration against what they feel to be the use of authority to bolster up bad methods, which they see being done in other areas of campus life, is behind much of the anti-authoritarianism and apparent apathy of the student body.

On the other hand, the faculty know equally well that what the students pay does not begin to cover the cost of what they get; they know also that their own salaries are not commensurate with their effort, and they dislike the whole suggestion that what is done in the classroom has a monetary equivalent. Consequently, they underestimate the resentment of a student who cannot but be conscious that what he is paying in fees he has often earned with painful difficulty, and they tend to think his attitude merely mercenary. They do not underestimate, however, the student's failure on his part to provide what they feel, with reason, they have a right to demand—thorough and thoughtful work. They have graded far too many slipshod and inadequate papers to have any

doubts about what they call "the essential shallowness of the normal undergraduate approach."

So a curious situation begins to be revealed: the faculty accuse the students of desiring the very thing which the students on their side accuse the faculty of providing—a dishonest substitute for education. The frustration of this situation is almost limitless and stems, it would seem, from a failure on the part of both always to examine the nature of the encounter between them. We who talk about education are perhaps too apt to talk somewhat glibly about "the search for truth," as if that is what we were doing in the classroom, for, as universities and colleges are at present constituted, this seems hardly their purpose at the undergraduate level. In return for the fees which it receives, the college or university makes few promises that the undergraduate will be permitted to take part in this exciting search, be given time and freedom to browse in the library, drop into those lectures which interest him, and so on. To be quite honest, it often scarcely suggests that within its walls the search is going on. What it does promise is that the student shall be given an opportunity to attend all the lectures of the courses to which he is assigned, and to do all the required reading. If he does, he will be examined in this material (very seldom in the subject as a whole) and be granted a degree if he passes. If he does not do the required reading, or if he is negligent in attending class, he is likely to discover quickly that he has ceased, somewhat ignominiously, to be a member of the college.

If the central activity of the undergraduate college really ought to be the search for truth, then clearly here is a major cause of the academic malaise. However, it is to be doubted whether this is the real problem. Although it is true that only a fraction of the undergraduates go on to graduate school, yet the relation of the two is important, and if the search for truth is to take place anywhere, it is probable that the graduate school provides a more suitable environment. The question may certainly be asked whether all undergraduate colleges are sufficiently preparing their

students for the kind of work they will have to do at the graduate level, disciplining them to do true and honest research, and encouraging them to think of advanced study as a goal worth struggling for, and whether the graduate schools themselves are always conscious of their different function. Far too many seem to continue unaltered the teaching methods of the undergraduate college. But this does not prove the methods in themselves to be either right or wrong, for it is certainly arguable that the major job of the undergraduate college is to give instruction, to provide that solid basis of knowledge without which graduate study cannot even begin.

Some, of course, would argue that education and instruction are separate activities. It is certainly true that they are not the same thing, but it is quite untrue that they are separate things. Instruction is not the same as education, but education includes instruction as a very necessary part of itself, so necessary that though an instructed man is not always educated, there is no such thing as an educated man who cannot be described also as well-instructed. Facts which do not issue in ideas may be sterile and unproductive, but they are not immediately dangerous; ideas, however, which are not soundly based upon facts possess "power without responsibility, the prerogative of the harlot throughout the ages."¹ The evil genius of our age is the factless, rootless idea, the malevolent inhabitant of the television set and the radio, and the modern man is ill-equipped to resist, not so much because he has no ideas with which to combat it, but because he does not have at his finger-tips the facts with which it must come to terms.

The "Package" Concept of Instruction

It is time, therefore, that we descended from the rarefied academic heights in which we imagine that we pursue the "search for

¹ From a speech by Stanley Baldwin, quoted in Lady Diana Cooper, *The Light of Common Day* (Hart-Davis, London, 1959).

truth," and examine more carefully the foundation upon which this search is to be conducted. We shall then see perhaps more clearly than we do at present that at the very basis of this search is a proper understanding of the relation between fact and idea. In such a relationship the ideas must never precede the facts, since of the very essence of education is Sherlock Holmes' dictum that "it is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data."² It is possible that the most serious indictment which can be made against the high schools today is just that the teaching they give encourages students to have these half-baked ideas with no basis in fact, isolating facts from ideas in objective tests, and ideas from facts in what they are pleased to call "creative writing." If this is so, there can be no question that the university or college must begin its job by insisting upon a necessary grounding in the facts, so that the ideas may have something to which they can be referred. One may lament the necessity of doing this at the college level, but as long as it is undone before the student arrives, the college authorities are driven to see plain, solid instruction as their major function.

The question, then, is not whether instruction ought to be given, but rather whether it is given effectively in undergraduate classes; and the answer to this question, one must say with great regret, is almost certainly that it is not. This is a serious statement. To say that the universities and colleges are not producing *educated* persons at the undergraduate level may always be countered by saying that to be fully educated one must proceed to graduate study. But to say that they do not produce *instructed* persons is to say that they do not do the very thing they set out to do. As always, there are very clearly some notable exceptions, and yet it would be idle to pretend that the majority of students who graduate from our colleges and universities can be said to know in any serious sense even the subject in which they have majored. They have certainly acquired for the purposes of the examination a knowledge of that

² Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, Scandal in Bohemia*.

material which has been covered in the various courses. Yet it is evident from the pathetic display of books in the bookstore of even a big university how they have hardly been encouraged at all to go beyond this in their reading. Moreover, an examination given a year after graduation would reveal how very little they still know even of the course material.³

The fallacy, it may be suggested, lies in the curious assumption, from which apparently both faculty and students proceed, though they might both emphatically deny it, that knowledge can in some fashion be conveniently packaged and exchanged between teacher and student. This curious concept appears to lie behind a great deal of college activity, and it is extremely insidious because it would be so very convenient if it were true. So many problems does such a concept promise to solve that both faculty and students (to say nothing for the moment of the administration) seem to have almost a tacit, entirely unexamined, agreement to live together by this deceptive "as if" philosophy. They act as if the concept were true, and try to see how far it will take them. When in the end it betrays them, as betray them it must, they are acutely aware of having been betrayed, and yet they ascribe the treachery, not to the fatal flaw in their common hypothesis, but to the failure of the other side to fulfill its side of the contract.

The apparent immediate advantage of this theory is that it seems to provide something which the educational world has notoriously lacked, and of which it feels itself to be in serious need, an easily applied and generally accepted standard of measurement. Once it is assumed, for the purposes of admission to college, that there is a standard amount which can be taught in a year, then it becomes possible to require two years of a foreign language as a prerequisite to entrance, and to suggest that a student who has done two years

³ An administrator in an important university told me recently that dormitories are usually built today without bookshelves, because there is no room for them. "Of course," he continued brightly, "you must not imagine that students do not have any books; they keep them under the bed."

of French at high school should do two years of Latin at college. It becomes possible also to devise a textbook which purports to give the amount of knowledge of medieval history which can be acquired in a semester. Using this concept, the administration may legitimately require students to have amassed a certain number of packages of knowledge before graduation, insisting for purposes of diversification that these be acquired in different areas, so many units in the major field and so many units in other departments. Moreover, on the package theory there is nothing seriously wrong in the mathematical computation of grades, nor in such devices as the cumulative average, since the units provided for Freshmen can be esteemed equal for grading purposes to those provided in the Senior year.

It is not less convenient for the student, for it enables him to transfer fairly easily from college to college; it provides him with assimilable blocks of material which he can set himself to master and then put behind him; and it removes the frightening suggestion that there are no limits to what he may be asked to learn. This suggestion is just as frightening to many professors. In a world which demands that a man be successful, it provides the faculty, just as much as the students, with a measure of what is expected of them, in other words with a job whose limits they can see, and in which they can with some reason hope for success.

The concept is no less tempting to the administrator. We are faced today with a pressure of students into college so gigantic as to appal us. The picture which is conjured up is one of yet more crowded classes, of harassed professors wrestling with more students than they can handle, and of endless demands for more and more facilities. If, however, we may be allowed to continue for a while to use the package concept, some measure of hope seems to exist. The requisite amount of knowledge may be given to as many persons as a hall will hold, and any testing of this knowledge may safely be left to graduate students, since on this theory there is no necessary connection between the teacher and the taught. This, of

course, is already done in a great many institutions, but it may logically be extended further, and be mechanized as much as possible. Teaching may be done by close-circuit television, and finally the teacher may be eliminated, the student being instructed, examined, graded, and if necessary admonished, entirely by machine. Experiments along this line are in fact already in progress.

The same package concept has made possible the tremendous specialization of the present college and university scene. It is not, of course, suggested that the professor, busily preparing a learned treatise on "The Ceremony of the Opening of the Mouth in the Book of the Dead," is doing anything so crude as acquiring units of knowledge. That process he is usually held to have put finally behind him when he obtained his Ph.D. Yet the idea is undoubtedly there, for those who press him to publish are those who pressed him first to obtain a higher degree, and their thinking has not materially changed as he has progressed. A book every two years demonstrates to the world that the instructor has mastered another unit; conversely, to postpone publication for twenty years or so suggests that he is being negligent.

Obviously, such rapid publication can, in most fields of study, be achieved only by careful specialization. However, upon the assumption on which the academic world at present so often proceeds there is nothing wrong in that, for it is basic to the package concept that we should agree that knowledge is indeed divisible, and that therefore it is entirely possible to separate it out into its component sections, and to ask different members of the faculty to concentrate each on a different section.

The Fallacy of This Concept

One should not be too hasty in condemning the package concept, for there is no doubt that as a working hypothesis it has served us very well. Without some such concept it is doubtful whether we should be able to screen so many applicants for college, whether

upon the present college and university budgets we should be able to instruct such gigantic numbers as we are doing at present, and whether we should be able to carry on modern undergraduate education at all. In particular, no one should quickly condemn the specialist, for without the assumption that knowledge could be divided into manageable sections, the tremendous complex of knowledge on which our modern way of life depends for its continuation could never have been ours. The immense progress in the control and conquest of disease, for instance, could never have taken place save in an educational system which actively encouraged its members to specialize.

Nevertheless, the theory does seem now to be reaching the limit of its usefulness, and weaknesses are being revealed. This is seen both in the developing break-down in classroom relations between the student and the professor, each feeling frustrated and betrayed because he is unable to get what he thinks is his due, and in the reaction against increasing specialization by members of faculty who find themselves unable to communicate with each other, so isolated have their studies tended to become. As a result there has developed a somewhat vague, but often very strong, desire to find some unifying factor, something which will give a pattern to the whole of knowledge. Some seek this in the field of religion, and the popularity of paperbacks on the eastern religions, especially Zen Buddhism, seems to reflect this. Others look for it in a "scientific" world view, or in some comprehensive philosophy of history, and part of the attraction which Communism at one time held for certain intellectuals lay in the fact that it claimed to provide this. The urge is largely instinctive, for though many people feel that somehow, somewhere, all truth should be one, it is remarkably difficult to advance from the knowledge that we already possess any convincing evidence for what most of us instinctively believe. None of the unifying factors which from time to time have been suggested has ever managed to command more than minority support.

These pressures to question the "as if" philosophy by which we work evidently spring from the increasing frustration and insecurity of academic people, both students and faculty, who see their landmarks removed, and are driven, almost despite themselves, to question the system by which they live. Yet their questioning is apprehensive, for to question at all seems to add to their insecurity, and so an interesting double reaction often takes place. On the one hand, for instance, the faculty are threatened by the embarrassing disadvantage in which they find themselves when they meet members of another department, and they tend to decry specialization, and to seek some unifying principle in the manner mentioned above. However, their efforts are half-hearted because few have the courage to expose themselves to what must be a humiliating experience, and to begin at their time of life to learn any subject other than that which they already know. They are daunted by the size of the task as they see it, and like Nicodemus, they shudder at the thought that a man may have to be born again when he is old. Consequently, they turn back again to seek security within their own discipline, and among their own colleagues, where they may be said to "belong."

Even within this specialized realm they are tempted to specialize still further, and to bolster up their shaken self-esteem by making themselves masters of some small area of knowledge, of which even their colleagues in the department are ignorant. So compulsive, in fact, has the drive to specialize now become that it is difficult for anyone to do anything else, if he wishes to retain the respect of the academic world. The more intelligent students, from whose ranks the university or college hopes to recruit its future teachers, are encouraged to narrow their field,⁴ and as a prerequisite to a college appointment today a Ph.D. is very nearly mandatory. For

⁴ C. P. Snow insists that this is worse in Britain ("The Two Cultures," in *Encounter*. No. 69, June 1959, pp. 17-24; No. 70, July 1959, pp. 22-27). However, it is difficult to believe this, and in any case his argument no more than shows that we are in the same boat.

an A.B. to decide that he would like to spend four years studying for a B.Sc. in the hope that subsequently he might be able to bring the arts and sciences into fruitful relationship would not, in most colleges and universities, advance him very far along the road to an instructorship. Although the college often proclaims to the world that its aim is to produce well-rounded and "educated" persons, the pressure on almost every able student is to get his diversification behind him, as if it were a tedious and irritating requirement of the administration rather than an important part of his education, and having done so to stick firmly to one field of study. So we have the entirely frustrating situation in which men are compelled by their own insecurity to perpetuate and even to strengthen that insecurity by deliberately maintaining the system which brought it about.

The same tendency is at work in the classroom. There the encounter between teacher and taught manifestly fails to produce either educated, or even merely instructed, students, and both students and faculty feel that their own inadequacies are exposed by this failure. The students, if they are honest, are well aware at the end of a semester course in almost any subject that they do not yet know what they had hoped they would, and what they feel that somehow they ought to know. The professor is equally aware of it, and uncomfortably conscious that according to the prevailing theory he ought to have given it to them. Each tends to be humiliated by the experience, and because humiliated, frustrated. Both then seek an escape from their frustration by trying to perfect the system which has brought it about, by trying to produce the ideal package which will at last give the student the knowledge that he looks for, and that the professor requires him to have. In college after college experiments are carried out in the streamlining of education; more refined objective tests are given; more exact assignments are made; more limited goals are set. With pathetic optimism the student buys a book on how to study; he confines his attention to the material of the course in the hope of gaining a more

perfect knowledge of at least that material, and he narrows his outlook instead of widening it, because to read diverse opinions, and opinions, moreover, which may be false, seems to him a certain way of destroying the security of knowledge for which he longs.

The stimulus to this kind of enquiry resulted, there is no doubt, in large measure from the successful launching of the first Russian satellite in October 1957. This forced upon our attention the frightening strides which the Russians had made in the development of missiles, and also made us unhappily aware of our own comparative weakness in scientific and technological training. For the first time it became respectable to criticize the existing educational system, and those who had been saying for years that all was not well found to their surprise that at last they were listened to.

The False Attempt to Strengthen the System

Yet, the result of the Sputnik scare has been not so much to alter the system as to strengthen it, by trying to provide a better package of knowledge, especially in the sciences. The immediate threat of the missile gap is so frightening that it seems as if we have no time to experiment, and rather than increase our insecurity in face of the Communist menace it seems better to work harder with the system that we have. The articles on Russian high school and college education which have attempted to show why they got ahead of us have been largely confined to studying Russian methods, as if the problem were really a technical one, and it is taken for granted that we can have nothing to learn from the Russian philosophy of education, since it would be far too revolutionary to suggest that the Communist world could possibly have a sound philosophy about anything. Even the studies of Russian methods have proved stronger meat than many could digest, as witness the many cancellations of subscriptions to *Time* and *Life* which resulted from the *Life* articles comparing Russian and American high schools. So alarming did many find the comparison that they preferred to close

their eyes to the implications of it and retreat into the imagined security of the system they knew, and by strengthening that system actually to increase their own insecurity.

One may, perhaps, be tempted to wonder why men should act in this fashion, why they should so foolishly increase the very insecurity they wish to banish. They do not, of course, do so deliberately, nor do they realize what it is that they are doing. They think rather that they are bolstering themselves against insecurity, because they tend to argue to themselves, "If we are insecure now, when after all we are doing that for which we know ourselves to have some training and competence, how much more terrifying would be our situation if we were to find ourselves in a world for which we had no training." Certainly, anyone is at liberty to point out that this is a very shortsighted argument, but those who are caught within the system cannot see this. To them the danger is real and immediate.

There is, however, a more profound reason why the majority of faculty and students are not merely unprepared to question the system, but actually struggle to maintain it and thereby to increase their own insecurity. This is because no system can ever be questioned by its own members from a position of insecurity. *δός μοι ποὺ στῶ και κινῶ τὴν γῆν.* Like Archimedes, a man in the academic community must have one firm point on which to stand if he is to attempt to move the earth. It is the absence of such a place of security, which must of necessity be outside the system, that makes any serious criticism of the system impossible. To suggest that the philosophy by which we live is false is to open up the possibility that therefore everything we are doing is pointless. But a man dare not suggest, even to himself, that in the profession to which he has given his life he is wasting his time, and even worse, that he is part of a system in which he cannot but waste his time. The very prospect reveals a hell of such untold frustration that he is almost bound to close his mind to it, and to try to pretend to himself that his work is worth while after all.

Yet, anyone who has been brought up to value intellectual integrity cannot but be uneasily aware that such a pretense is false, and that for all his efforts he is achieving little or nothing. He knows, for instance, that although he teaches as if the students were going to remember after they have left college what he had taught them, yet all the evidence suggests that they will not do so; he pretends to himself that he is having an influence on his students, though studies of faculty-student relations reveal this as an illusory hope for all but the rare and gifted professor;⁵ if he is in the humanities, he has to recognize the increasing domination of the physical sciences, even in the Liberal Arts college, and yet he continues, for the sake of his self-esteem, to play out the comedy of the superiority of the cultivated humanist.

What else can he do? He cannot, without academic suicide, tell himself what he fears may be the truth. He is like a man who dares not go to the doctor for fear of learning that he has cancer. He must, lest he be humiliated beyond what he can bear, maintain undamaged the façade of "scholarship," and convince both himself and the world, for just a little longer, that it is more than a façade.

So the frustration of the classroom has developed, proliferated, deepened and hardened, and it continues endlessly to do so. It is no longer accurate to describe it as frustration, for the situation has passed beyond that stage. What we have today in many situations is not frustration but helplessness, at times something near panic, and much of the academic activity is marked by a stupendous failure of nerve. Far too many of us are no longer convinced of the value of what we do. It is a striking fact that at a time when there are more prospective students than there are places at college for them to occupy, the entrance requirements are not noticeably being raised. Even those colleges which pride themselves on their intellectual standing seem to feel that they must send out into the highways and by-ways to compel men to come in. They seem afraid to pro-

⁵ See for instance Philip E. Jacob, *Changing Values in College* (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1957), pp. 78-87.

claim publicly that they take their stand on academic excellence lest they frighten the students away.

So we live by this "as if" philosophy, hesitant and uncertain of ourselves, afraid either to question the philosophy or to take our stand firmly upon it, lest it break to pieces under the strain and we be left alone and helpless in a shattered world. "We see not our signs any more," nor is there left any authority to guide us.

Authority and Power

“Authority,” which twice crept into the discussion in the last chapter, is very nearly a naughty word in many academic circles. Students tend to resent authority because they suspect it of serving to bolster up bad methods, and faculty fear that it may be used irresponsibly to interfere with academic freedom. It is common to find them maintaining that authority in any form threatens the untrammelled liberty of the mind to range where it will in the endless search for truth. Hence, they defend strongly the right of the instructor, within the four walls of the classroom, to say and teach exactly what he likes.

That the liberty of the teacher is necessary to the free interchange of ideas, and therefore to a sound education, it would be difficult to deny. Moreover, the experience of faculty in what Lazarfeld and Thielens call “the difficult years” of the McCarthy era¹ give excellent reasons for their apprehension. Nevertheless, the supporters of this liberty often seem unaware that when they are claiming to demand the banishment of power from the academic scene, they are in reality demanding the transferment of a large measure of it to themselves. “The Freedom of the Classroom,” which sounds so very noble in theory, is more likely in practice to mean the absolute authority of the instructor. There is, in fact, in some quarters, much

¹ Paul E. Lazarfeld and Wagner Thielens, Jr., *The Academic Mind* (The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1958).

criticism of this authority, which it is claimed, often amounts to tyranny, from which the student has little or no appeal.²

Part of the problem seems to lie in the curious confusion which exists in the popular mind about power and power politics, whereby it is imagined that power is in some way wicked in itself, and should as far as possible be abolished. From this confusion, which one may see, for instance, in almost any popular discussion on international politics, the academic mind is in no way exempt, for the scholar is apt to take just as naive and popular a view as anyone else as soon as he moves outside his own discipline. In any social group, however, whether it is large or small, the exercise of power is an inescapable reality, and the political problem is therefore not a question of abolishing that power, but of seeing that it is not misused. It is often possible to argue that power should be redistributed, so that too much power shall not be concentrated in the hands of a few, or that restraint shall be exercised in the use of it, but it is never possible to press for its complete removal.

That being so, it is idle to suggest an abolition of power in the college, for that would lead merely to anarchy, and to the seizing of power by unauthorized groups. Instead, one must ask whether the power and authority of the instructor is essential to the classroom experience, and to that measure of instruction which we have seen to be of necessity the major part of education at the undergraduate level. The answer to this question must surely be that it is. Instruction is either greatly hindered, or even rendered impossible, where the instructor has lost control of the class, or in any class where the students have reason to think that he does not speak "with authority." Discussion, argument, and debate are an important part of any true instruction, but in any classroom discussion there must lie behind all the argument the frank authority of the teacher. Anything else becomes a mere bull-session, which may

² Stephen F. Bayne, Jr., *The Faith, the Church and the University, A Report of a Conversation Among University Christians* (Forward Movement Publications, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1959), pp. 35 and 50-52.

have its value, but which is something very different from instruction.

Of course, it may be objected that authority and power are not the same thing, and that it is a mistake to use the two words as if they were interchangeable. This is perfectly true, and yet authority without power behind it is meaningless, for sooner or later it is bound to be challenged, and then it must either enforce itself or abdicate. In the college classroom, the authority of the professor has behind it, not only the weight of experience, knowledge and age, and the traditional respect of the disciple for the master but also the sanctions of assignments, quizzes, book reports, and grades, whereby the professor may bluntly discipline the students to be obedient to his instruction. It is false to pretend that these are not very real acts of power, for a failing grade carries penalties with it, and too many failing grades mean certain dismissal from the college. If a student should challenge this exercise of power, the professor will almost inevitably expect the administration to support him, and might in some case feel himself justified in resigning if he did not receive this support.

One cannot be completely happy about this situation, for power can always be misused, and those students are too often justified who suspect that they are submitted to an arbitrary authority. There are certainly teachers, possibly even many, who use the grading system to ensure that their own point of view on matters of opinion shall prevail; there are those who give low grades for non-attendance or for work handed in late, so that the grades no longer represent academic achievement and cannot properly be equated with grades given in another course;³ there are those

³ That so many professors should feel driven to use such expedients is a clear indication that authority always stands in need of some sanctions which it can apply should the occasion arise. The dilemma of the teacher in the undergraduate college is that he is required to give instruction, which cannot properly be done without authority, and yet he cannot apply the sanctions of the high school, where, of course, a very large amount of the present undergraduate instruction ought to be being given.

whose grading measures only written work and makes no allowance for intelligent discussion in class; and there are those who allow themselves to be unduly swayed by personal likes and dislikes, a temptation to which every thoughtful instructor knows himself to be exposed.

As a result of the injustices which so clearly accompany the present system, many would suggest some external limitation of the professor's power over the student, feeling that it is inherently bad to allow so much power in the hands of one person. Nevertheless, it is hard to see how the imposition of external restraints would help. First, it must be recognized that only the instructor in a class can be said to have anything even approaching an adequate knowledge of all that has been done there. Second, though he may be urged to give his grades fairly, there is no possible way of ensuring that he does, for anyone coming in from outside could at best grade only on written work, which would be no more than a partial assessment.⁴ Third, every kind of external limitation is a hindrance to good teaching. The brilliant teacher must be trusted to go his own way with as few restrictions as possible. Unfortunately, to make few restrictions means opening the door to the possibility of bad teaching, for it is very difficult to limit the excesses of the one without limiting also the excess of brilliance of the other. The greater the restraints upon the teacher, the greater the mediocrity of the teaching.

The Development of Paternalism

It is possible that the real evil is not the power of the teacher in the classroom, where, after all, he *ought* to be the authority, but its

⁴ There is no suggestion here that external examiners should be abolished. The chief function of the external examiner, however, is to provide an exterior standard and thereby ensure that an honors student does not fall below the standards of the academic world at large. He therefore reinforces the authority of the professors. Nevertheless, his judgments remain partial because he sees only part of the student's work.

transference to a situation outside the classroom, where his authority, quite properly, is very much less. At present he has a power outside the classroom which is out of all proportion to his authority, and is therefore arbitrary. To do him justice, he does not normally demand this power, but exercises it quite involuntarily, because the grade he gives is recorded by the administration, and the degree a student receives is made to depend almost entirely upon a mathematical calculation from these grades. But for the student the degree represents a situation more charged with power than can be legitimately expressed by a mere average of the grades he has received. Often, though far from always, it largely determines his life for the next few years. Certainly, if it does not do that, it opens doors which remain inexorably closed to those who have not received a degree. It is this failure, on the part of the college or university, to recognize the power reality which leads to a great deal of student frustration and resentment, for students have no doubt at all of the measure of power that the degree represents for them.

The remedy, then, is not to be what some have called "Dewey-eyed," but to recognize the realities of the power situation, and to recognize them outside the classroom as well as in it. Curiously enough, though this may shock many people, it is not desirable in any educational institution to devise a system which eliminates *all* injustice, for every student should be exposed in some measure to injustice in his formative years lest he be thrown off balance by the injustice which he is bound to meet in the world. Since, obviously, there should never be deliberate injustice, it follows that the injustices to which he is exposed must be merely those minor injustices which inevitably accompany the normal use of power and authority. Perhaps more curiously still, students do not normally resent minor injustices, for they are usually intelligent enough to recognize that they are not intentional, nor in the long run serious. However, minor injustices become major ones if they are trans-

ferred outside the sphere to which they belong, and though one should not be unduly disturbed by the inevitable *fact* of injustice, it is very important indeed to limit the *effect* of it. The present use of grades in so many institutions as nearly the sole determinant of the all-important degree gives rise to such major injustices, and the whole system needs to be seriously questioned.

It cannot, however, be questioned in isolation, for it is part of a very general pattern of campus life whereby power is continually exercised without relation to the realities of the situation. This, it should be noticed, far more than the absence of democracy, is the essence of tyranny. Democratic procedures are a very valuable check on tyranny because they represent an attempt to relate the power to the situation in which it is exercised, but they are not actually *necessary* to such a relationship, which can, in fact, be procured by other means. In a relatively small society, for instance, a conscientious ruler may make himself so closely aware of the realities of a society, of its strains and stresses and tensions, that he governs with justice and equity. Indeed, in a truly benevolent autocracy the individual usually has a much better chance of obtaining justice than he has in any other system. This can be very clearly seen for instance, in the tribal society of Arabia, where every person has the unquestioned right of access to the ruler, who knows and understands the society of which he is very much a part. The result can be extraordinarily satisfying, despite the poverty and the continual afflictions of the environment.

However, as the society develops, even if the autocrat remains consistently benevolent, the system breaks down. This is not primarily because those who are governed become more mature, as many believe, but because the increasing size and complexity of the society make it impossible for the ruler to understand the situation, and the system changes to one of paternalism, in which the ruler assures his people (though increasingly falsely) that "Daddy

knows best," and in the end to a situation of tyranny in which he can no longer make even this pretense.⁵

The signs of this change are a steady development of government by decree or fiat, without regard to the realities of the society, and the really alarming feature of the power structure in the modern college or university is that it is marked by exactly this development. In the classroom one has a society in microcosm, still sufficiently small for the "ruler," who must be the professor, to remain sensitive to the realities of the society, and to exercise his power with restraint and equity. Such a society, as many students and professors will testify, can be a very happy one indeed, though it should be noticed that every external restraint of the professor's power limits his ability to be just, because it limits his awareness of the society. Consequently, any system whereby grading is done by someone else, however charmingly "objective" it may be, is destructive of the society, because it destroys the true power relationship within that society. This relationship is maintained when the power is used only to support the authority which is proper to the society, in this case the authority which belongs to true instruction.

The tremendous size of the classes in some institutions, the pressure on the faculty to publish, the endless committee work, the emphasis upon research as opposed to teaching—all these limit the professor's ability to know his class, limit, that is, the ability of the ruler to know and understand the society. This is serious, because democratic procedures do not belong to the classroom, where authority must pertain to the instructor. The checks upon the misuse of power which are possible in certain other societies are not, therefore, so easily applied in the classroom situation. In the true class,

⁵ A very interesting example of this could be seen, for instance, in Jordan in 1949 when King Abdullah, a benevolent and devout ruler of the old school, added to his little kingdom, which he did understand, the Arabs of Palestine, whose life he did not understand at all. His failure to comprehend them, despite his very real political wisdom, led in the end to his murder.

of course, the student has easy and direct access to the professor, and so the most valuable feature of the benevolent autocracy is preserved. In large classes, however, this becomes increasingly difficult, and so paternalism, with its tendency to tyranny, results. This can happen also, it must be admitted, even in small classes, if other factors tending towards paternalism are present, as they seem to be at the present time, and the society of many classrooms has become markedly paternalistic, even bluntly authoritarian, and government is largely by fiat or decree. This can be seen in such things as courses which are "imposed" unchanged upon the students from year to year, and in which no attempt is made to modify the pattern in relation to the character of the student body. Other paternalistic decrees are assignments made without relation to the point reached in the class, all attempts to fit the students into a preconceived and rigid grading system, and such devices as the requirement of book reports which the professor, for sheer lack of time, has no intention of reading, the argument being that it is somehow good for the students to do the assignments or read the books, even if there is no attempt at integrating the work into the course.

Paternalism Outside the Classroom

Outside the class there is even more paternalism. This, in part, is an inevitable development from the rapidly increasing size of most colleges and universities, but in part also it results from the administration of the college by people who neither teach nor study in it. They exist entirely to be "the government," but a government whose power must be exercised very largely out of relation to the realities of a society which they cannot appreciate because they do not form part of it. This development, it may be noted, may operate apart from the factor of size, for even small colleges, in the interests of what they believe to be efficiency, are tending to develop separate administrative bodies. Moreover, once more even in small

colleges, the faculty often acquiesce in this, allowing faculty meetings to become gatherings for the purpose of giving faculty approval, and therefore a measure of intellectual respectability, to administrative decisions. Thus, they will accept, often without question, the administration's decisions even in realms which they might with much justification regard as their own. Such a realm, for instance, is that of granting degrees. This is essentially an academic matter, and yet again and again the faculty will vote approval *en bloc* of a list of candidates for degrees, presented to them by the registrar, who has prepared it upon the basis of the administration's files. Admittedly, such devices as comprehensive examinations impose a certain check on this, but once again, the larger the graduating class, the less the faculty can know them, whatever devices they use.

Sooner or later, however, it becomes apparent that the decrees of the administration are not in accordance with the realities of the situation. Such a decree might, for instance, be an order given by a dean to an enthusiastic young instructor not to allow the standard of his course in English 101 D to rise above the level of all the other sections of the same course, or possibly the granting of a scholarship to a promising young athlete with no academic pretensions, or an appointment or promotion made for what appear to the faculty to be irrelevant or non-academic reasons. When this kind of thing happens, the paternalistic structure becomes evident, and the resentment and frustration of the faculty and student body equally so.⁶

The problem would be sufficiently complicated if it stopped there, but it does not. The administration is only partially the govern-

⁶ A frightening example of such paternalism which has recently come to my notice occurred in a university in the Middle West. Some students who attended the same class had dropped into the habit of meeting informally after class to discuss the ideas raised in the class. They were told officially by the Dean that either they must report their meetings to his office and have them included on the calendar, or run the risk of being suspended from the university.

ment. Very often it is exactly what its name implies, a body responsible for administering policies initiated elsewhere, and today, in a great many institutions, it is only rarely that these policies are initiated by the faculty. Instead, the whole college or university community is subject to the authority of some other body, showing all the marks of paternalism, that is, of government sincerely intended to be for the good of the governed, but actually marked by decrees which are increasingly irrelevant, until at last the enforcement of them can be described only as tyranny.

Many among the faculty would class the trustees as a paternalistic body of this nature, though they would admit that their paternalism is sometimes strongly modified by the great interest which many trustees take in the institution, and their sincere efforts to understand the academic activity. Nevertheless, the trustees are seldom chosen for their academic attainments, and their contacts with campus life are normally confined to occasional visits. Their power, however, is quite real, and its paternalistic character nowhere more apparent than in the appointment of the president, for which they are normally responsible. Like all paternalistic rulers, they are genuinely anxious to promote the welfare of the society they govern, but see little necessity to take the members of that society into their confidence or consult their wishes. They work on the principle that "Daddy knows best," and though their appointment is very, very seldom merely arbitrary (for they usually take endless trouble to find a suitable person), it is occasionally irrelevant. Sometimes the irrelevance of the appointment is so evident that the new president and the faculty find it impossible to work together, but in any case the society is likely to be disrupted because the faculty have heard grim stories, which have lost nothing in the telling, of bad appointments elsewhere, and so, before the new president ever appears on the scene, they have decided to grit their teeth and prepare for the worst.

Other, quite evidently paternalist, bodies are the legislature in

relation to state institutions, and the various ecclesiastical organizations that exercise power over some of the church-related colleges. The latter offers a very interesting example of this phenomenon, for usually there can be little doubt of either their excellent intentions or their essential ignorance of the academic and scholastic situation. Consequently, alas, there can be equally little doubt about the irrelevance of many of their decrees.

A good example of this is sometimes the practice of requiring student attendance at chapel, which, at any rate in many colleges of this kind, is a requirement of the church body to which the college is related. Now, it is perfectly possible that thoughtful persons, both among the faculty and among the students, may object to this requirement as irrelevant and unrealistic, arguing that it fails to achieve the very purpose for which it was designed since among the students it tends to bring the worship of the Church into disrepute; that it is intellectually dishonest and therefore false to the true purpose of the institution; and that it is out of tune with the general pattern of freedom and authority as applied in the rest of the college, and therefore essentially irrelevant to that particular society. Not everyone will agree with them, of course, and there may be as well much opposition to required chapel which is merely ignorant and selfish, but, given the character of the college to which they belong, their arguments may possibly have good reason behind them. Yet they may find the greatest difficulty in challenging the regulation, since the body responsible for enacting it is convinced that it is a benevolent decree, on the ground that it is really good for students to attend chapel.

A similar situation may develop, both in private colleges and state institutions, over the question of drinking. Those on the campus—administration, faculty, and students—who are concerned about the problem of drunkenness may decide (and again there may be *reason* behind their conviction) that it would be much easier to deal with if it were brought into the open. They would

advocate the permitting of drinking on the campus, instead of driving it underground by prohibiting it, with the result that students go away from college to drink, and then drive back in a more than unsteady condition. Their experience of the college situation which they know may entirely justify this attitude, and yet they may be powerless, because the trustees or the church authorities believe that the prohibition is for the good of the students.

There is, of course, the world of difference between the fervent insistence of the professor that in his opinion all drinking is of the devil, or his statement in class that the Christian Church requires regular attendance at divine service on the Lord's Day, and the arctic enactment of the authorities that "no alcoholic beverages are permitted on campus," or that "all students must be present in chapel at 11:00 a.m. on Sundays." The one is part of the instruction, and may be questioned, discussed, defended, and if necessary flatly contradicted. In other words, it is relevant to the society. The other is an irrelevant decree.

Naturally, not every decree is irrelevant, for a decree that all students must sit for the final examinations in all courses for which they are registered, unless excused by the instructor, is entirely relevant to the society in almost any academic institution. Moreover, even the two decrees we have been considering are not irrelevant in themselves, for required attendance at chapel would presumably be quite in place on a campus with the religious ethos of, let us say, Wheaton. It is not necessarily false to the academic activity as such that drinking should be forbidden or daily worship insisted on. Brilliance would not automatically be stultified should both these regulations be enforced, as some of the opponents of them are inclined to suggest. The question is rather one of relevance, and the criterion of relevance must always be the relation of the decree to the character of the society for which it is designed.

Special Interest Groups on Campus

The power structure of a university or college, however, is even more complex than the foregoing would suggest, for there are also the special interest groups, which seek continually to exert pressure on the college so that its policy will accord more with their own aims. Such groups are the athletic departments, the fraternities and sororities, and the alumni. In fact, almost any group on campus may at times exert such pressure; these three are merely among the most generally powerful. They are all able to advance strong arguments for their benevolence, and their spokesmen are genuinely convinced that they are working for the good of the whole society. Yet, since they are all seeking their own interests, the measures they seek to promote are in danger of being more irrelevant than anything we have encountered yet. They do not, of course, form part of the very complicated government of the institution, and so they cannot properly make decrees. Nevertheless, they have clear paternalist tendencies, and it is possible that a paternalist structure fosters the development of these groups. Sometimes, it is true, such a group may become so powerful that to all intents and purposes it forms part of the government, and is able to make decrees binding on the whole society. The football interests have notoriously achieved this in some places. Such a development is likely to be quite disastrous and very disruptive.

It may be objected that the alumni are more likely to have the true interests of the college society at heart, but this is not always true, for they rapidly lose touch with the academic situation which they have known, in any case, only as students, and they are apt to look back on it through a slightly sentimental haze. Their influence can be disturbing, even though their continued interest is essential to the economic welfare of the college, for they usually resist any suggestion of change. The college may have raised its

academic standing under the guidance of an energetic president, but those alumni who attended college before the change will fail to grasp this, and will exert their pressure to keep the college as it was before.

Fraternities and sororities have a peculiar interest in this connection. Their influence, for good or for bad, on the campus has been much debated, both the political pressure which they exert on campus activities, and also the social effect of such closed societies, which, it must be admitted, can in some institutions be very harmful indeed. However, what has been less studied is the manner in which the fraternity system tends to repeat the political pattern of the college world as a whole. This, of course, is not surprising, since everybody, students included, tends to repeat politically that pattern which he already knows, because he finds it difficult to conceive of anything else. Fraternities, then, though accused by outsiders of having an almost tyrannical character, show rather the normal college pattern of paternalism, with all the trappings of democracy, elaborate voting systems, and meetings conducted strictly according to Robert's Rules of Order. It is true that the visitor to a fraternity, perhaps more especially on a state university campus, may be shocked by the blunt instructions which the president gives to the brothers, and think of this as tyranny. But it is not so thought of by the members themselves, for they, being within the society, recognize that the orders are intended for their own good, and they dutifully accept them. Then behind the local chapter stands the National, an admirable example of the removed but benevolent authority, which exerts considerable power and from time to time frankly issues decrees, albeit with the good of the society at heart. In accordance with the paternalist pattern, these decrees may be relevant, or equally they may not. Thus, a racial discrimination clause, such as some fraternities have, may have some relevance to the society on a southern university campus (though this is *not* to say that it would be desirable, even there), but it does not follow that it would be equally relevant at a northern institution.

Yet, a northern chapter which opposed the National on the segregation issue would be in real danger of losing its charter, so convinced would the National be that it knew what was good for the society as a whole.

The fraternity system, then, whatever its shortcomings may be, does have considerable political value, in that it introduces students, at a level which they can understand, to the political pressures and the tensions, to the paternalism and the incipient tyranny, which they will find in the university system as a whole. Indeed, one cannot seriously ask that they shall do anything else but reflect the political pattern of the whole academic society, for they know no other. One may have many misgivings about this whole pattern, but it is no more initiated by the fraternities than the moon is the author of moonlight. What is more serious is that, as the fraternity system reflects the political system of the university, so does the university reflect the political pattern of the world at large. It is more serious because those responsible for the academic institutions have neither the immaturity nor the impermanence of students. Moreover, it is not the job of the college or university to be a mere mirror of the world.

Paternalism as a Post-Democratic Phenomenon

That the western democracies are more and more characterized by statism of a paternalist kind is increasingly obvious today. Clearly, the tendency is far advanced in the welfare states of western Europe, but it is evident also here, where it is no less real because it seems, at the moment, unlikely to lead to a paternalism of the welfare state kind. Here, it is more likely to take the form of paternalistic big business, in which employers and union leaders cooperate to produce the conformist, the worker who "never had it so good," and the organization man, using for this end all the soothing and stultifying devices of mass communication.

Other signs of this include the building up, in country after

country, of the man at the top into a deliberate father image—de Gaulle as the savior of France, Adenauer as the Grand Old Man of Germany, Macmillan as the man who healed the rift in Britain after Suez, and now as the international leader, and Eisenhower as the paternal guardian of the American Way of Life. Moreover, there is an increasing tendency for the State in the West to decree, not only what we shall do, but also what we shall think and what our moral standard shall be. Thus, the State decides upon what grounds a man may be considered worthy of a passport, and what scientific and other information it is safe for him to read, what books may properly be in school libraries, and so on. In an alarming number of instances the State can decide whether or not a man shall keep his job on the basis of what the State believes that he thinks, and if the decision is that he shall not keep it, he has very little redress. The State certainly acts for what it claims to be the general good of the people, and its decisions are accepted by the majority as tending to that good, since they seem not to question that the State has means of knowing what is best. Yet, it is only a slight change from this philosophy to the belief that the members of the society should be required to act for the good of the State.

Now, it should be clear that the remedy for this does not lie in the more diligent application of democratic procedures, for the neopaternalism we are considering here differs from the old patriarchal paternalism in that it is essentially post-democratic. It is the result of the strains and stresses of the western democratic system, wherein the governed gratefully accept the benevolent decrees of the State, and thereby absolve themselves from the intolerable task of trying to understand their own society. Paternalism, in any form, results from an inability of the rulers to comprehend the society for which they are responsible, and in the western post-democratic paternalism the consent of the governed is no longer of any help, for they have ceased to understand themselves. Democ-

racy, therefore, in a modern western society tends to breed paternalism, just as in the new societies of the ex-colonies it tends to breed personal rule. In both the change springs from the people's real inability to perform their very necessary function within the democratic system.

This function is to provide the means of comprehension. If there is to be a democratic system in any country, then the society must be of the kind to which democratic government is relevant. A democratic system cannot persist in an essentially non-democratic society, in a society, that is, where the whole democratic process is not ceaselessly carried on at every level, where it is not, in fact, as much the normal activity of the society as eating and drinking is of persons. Nothing can make a country democratic where the villages and towns do not have this character; no amount of democratic paraphernalia will achieve it. We are very inclined to forget this when we arrange for elaborate national elections in newly-liberated countries which do not have this democratic basis, and then we are surprised when in a few years a dictator takes over.

Now, the essence of democracy is not national elections—they are the product of democracy, the means whereby it expresses itself. Instead, it is *debate*. The democratic system is bound to be irrelevant to a society in which there is no debate, in which the endless "argument about it and about" does not continue far into the night in hamlet after hamlet and town after town. Without this argument democracy will wither in the beds where it grew.

This, then, reveals the true political weakness of the university system, and indeed its treachery to the society at large, for if there is no debate in the academic world, it is not likely that there will be a great deal of it elsewhere. It is true that debate is not confined to academic circles, and is likely to flourish also among poets, novelists, and playwrights; but it is to the colleges and universities that we must look to give the training to the multitude. If there is ever to continue the true basis of democracy, there must be a

society accustomed to argue and discuss, to listen attentively to the arguments of others, to reach decisions on the basis of the evidence and not on hearsay, and perhaps above all, to know upon what subjects it is qualified to reach a decision. Where these are not the marks of the society, democracy is meaningless, and paternalism with its inevitable irrelevance and frustration is certain to ensue.

Now, it should be obvious that debate does not normally characterize the academic scene of today. The intellectual student societies are often feeble, and on many campuses have ceased to exist, and class discussion is essentially sterile. Certainly, there are exceptions, but in the vast number of undergraduate colleges the students are not merely unprovoked to argue, but claim that they are penalized if they do. In this passive society democracy cannot thrive, and though the democratic motions be maintained, all life will go out of them, and men will accept with relief the kindly decrees of the administration. We may regret it; we may make scathing comments about conformism and the mass man; we may gird against the paternalism of the college system; but as long as we continue to teach from the textbook, to adhere to a rigid system of assignments, and to test "objectively," we can expect no other result. The treason of the intellectuals will be complete.

Living by an "As if" Philosophy

We see, therefore, that once more we are living by an "as if" philosophy, persuading ourselves against all reason that we are doing our job. We act as if in the academic society students were being trained for democracy, as if the colleges and universities, where the 'search for truth' is being carried on, were among the bulwarks of freedom, as if teaching *about* democracy ensured the continuation of the democratic process, and as if the elaborate system of voting which pervades so much of the university scene in

committees, fraternities, and faculty meetings were an adequate substitute for argument and debate. Yet, when we examine it, we find it to be a very hollow structure. We talk of academic freedom, but instead we lay the foundations of the benevolent and all-controlling state.

The situation is all the more disturbing because paternalism, once allowed to mature, has an extraordinary ability to smother its enemies by the benevolence of its intentions, not becoming tyranny until it can no longer be overthrown save by revolution. For this reason it is horribly difficult to control or attack. We see this when we realize that although debate is quite essential to the democratic system, no government, not even a democratic one, really likes it. Governments exist very largely to keep order, that is, to see that people behave themselves. Therefore, they take no great interest in seeing that people know anything (the amount of material which even a democratic government likes to keep secret unnecessarily is amazing) and they are inclined to distrust discussion, which they fear may lead in the end to some kind of misbehavior. Consequently, in a society with paternalistic tendencies, where opposition to the government's kindly decrees is held to be misbehavior of a high order, discussion is steadily and irresistibly eliminated for the good of the society.

The end result of such suffocating, if well-meant, benevolence is the creation of a "proletariat," of an alienated mass of people who neither accept nor understand the symbols by which the governing minority live, and the existence of such a group means, sooner or later, a revolt. This is well seen in the nationalist movements which develop in colonial situations, where the nation that is governed cannot comprehend, and therefore cannot live by, the symbols which have meaning in the governing nation. For a time the government attempts to deal with this situation by imposing the symbols, since those who compose the government believe their way of life to be good also for the governed. Thus Britain sought

to impose on India the concept of the Queen-Empress; France saw herself entrusted with *une mission civilisatrice*; and Russia and America in their turn impose the symbols of Communism or the American Way of Life. It is a period of frustration and suffocation for the governed, though usually accompanied by many material benefits, intended to convince them of the value of what is being done. Yet it can be no more than a temporary situation, since the essence of the "proletariat" is that they are alienated, and therefore the symbols have no meaning for them. They reject them, often violently, as men must always reject what they cannot understand.

Though most clearly to be seen in a colony, a proletariat is a more universal phenomenon, and may easily develop *within* a country, or even in a smaller society. It is strikingly characteristic of the Western world today, where the ancient symbols are without meaning to the great mass of the governed. In the interim, or pre-revolutionary period the developing proletariat tends to make demands which they hope may alleviate their alienation. They ask for greater and greater material benefits (*panem circensesque*) so they may take refuge in them; or they look for a different system (independence, for instance); or they demand a "sign," some dramatic, apocalyptic act which will solve all their problems (a summit conference, or the nicely timed pre-Christmas journey of a chief of state). The revolution, it should be noticed, is not always violent and only occasionally has the form of what a history textbook means by the word. In the international scene, for instance, it could take the form of a third world war.

The reflection of this pattern in the academic world is very clear. In the larger institutions especially, but also in the smaller colleges, the rejection of the ancient symbols is evident, and one is dealing today with students and faculty for whom they have often ceased to have any meaning. In their increasing alienation they make the normal demands of a "proletariat": they ask for perpetual material benefits; they complain that if only the system were different

life would be easier; they demand a "Messiah"⁷ who will solve their academic problems from above.

Those in whose hands the power resides, however, seek not so much to change the system as to maintain it. The old symbols are imposed upon a society which can no longer comprehend them, commencement exercises, religious emphasis weeks, and all the other paraphernalia of the academic activity. Criticism of the symbols, or of the way of life for which they stand is, however, discouraged, even, in some institutions, to the extent of being forbidden.

To see this illustrated in the academic world, one has only to look at a religious emphasis week on a state university campus, for such weeks are very, very seldom the forum for real discussion about religious questions, but too often instead the means of assuring students that all religions are working towards a common end, and that therefore argument is superfluous. On one big university campus, at the time of the Suez crisis, the advisor to foreign students called all the Arabs together and told them to say nothing, not even in private conversation. On others the appeals board is expected to support the dean on all occasions, because they are supposed to realize that even when he makes mistakes he is doing his best, and that even when wrong, his decrees are essentially benevolent. On yet another, a state university campus, so strict a well-meaning censorship is imposed, that student criticism of the institution leads to almost certain dismissal.

To debate in this atmosphere is excessively difficult, for to debate seriously is always to ask the questions which most people do not want asked, and this, according to the paternalist philosophy, is misbehaving indeed. So men concur. Frustrated by their inability

⁷ This is seen very clearly if ever faculty are asked to draw up a list of qualifications for a new President, for there is no virtue which they do not demand that he shall possess. They indulge, during the interregnum, in a brief apocalyptic dream, though they soon become convinced that the Trustees have no intention of advancing the apocalypse.

to do the thing for which they exist they escape into an academic fantasy. Faculty pretend to themselves that they are debating when they meet in committee, or when in professional gatherings they argue about minutiae, and they accept the thesis that productivity is to be measured merely by publication in an effort to escape from any necessity to debate in the classroom. Students in their turn imagine that they have fulfilled the intellectual requirements when they have obtained an A or a B in class, and they pretend that they have no need either to study or to discuss a subject in which they are not taking a course.

And this, alas, is precisely what the administration, in far too many institutions, encourages them both to think.

Collapsing Community

The distribution of power within an academic institution is, as we have seen, extremely complex. However, it is rendered even more so today by the fissiparous nature of the modern academic community, which has a continual tendency to split up into its component parts. This splitting is strongly fostered by the present passion to achieve efficiency by specializing and by the division of function, and is accompanied, almost inevitably, by a parallel tendency to divide the power. Power in any society is marked by a certain restlessness, by a tendency to shift instead of remaining firmly with the group to which it was originally assigned,¹ and when the groups are divided this restlessness receives an added impetus. As the major groups split up into minor ones, the power tends to move away from the body for which it was intended and lodge temporarily with the smaller groups, some of which have no clearly defined character, and are therefore hard to identify.

As an example of this tendency one may consider the rule about compulsory chapel which was instanced in the last chapter. If we examine the application of this rule at some particular college,²

¹ The ineffectiveness of both the League of Nations and the United Nations can be ascribed in large measure to this tendency, for only a few years after each was brought into being the international power structure had ceased to correspond with the structure of the international organization.

² I have no definite college in mind. This is a somewhat composite picture.

we may find very possibly that in the first place the trustees were responsible for instituting the rule, and that therefore the rule can be changed only by trustee action. However, we may find also that the trustees refrain from making any move in the matter, because they fear the effect of such a move upon a rather vaguely defined group of alumni who are held to be both conservative and influential. Clearly, then, the power has passed out of the hands of the trustees, for they find themselves unable to change their own rule.

Yet it has not passed directly into the hands of the conservative alumni, for though their influence prevents the trustees from acting, they themselves can take no action at all in the matter. Instead, the power has become divided, and a thoroughly chaotic situation has developed: the rule affects only the students, but the students have no say at all; the rule is enforced by the administration, but if ever a student desires some modification of the rule he probably has to petition, not the administration, but the faculty; the faculty dutifully discuss the petition and vote upon it, but they have not even the technical authority to alter the rule, which possibly a great many of them may heartily dislike; the technical authority rests with the trustees, whose hands are tied because they fear the power of a group of alumni, who are completely unaffected by the rule and whose opinion the trustees have probably never tried to canvass. The result of this chaos is likely to be that the rule remains on the books, and those who are most affected by it can only fulminate helplessly against it.

One finds something very similar taking place in the matter of hiring new faculty. Here, technically, it is probable that the contract is made with the trustees, but in fact the letter of appointment is sent out by the president. However, it is only rarely that either president or trustees actually choose the person who is to be appointed (often, indeed, they would be thought to have grossly exceeded their powers if they did), and it is extremely difficult to find out who really does the choosing. The system varies widely

from college to college, from department to department within a college, and even without rhyme or reason from appointment to appointment within the same department. There is no clear pattern of whose advice is to be consulted, and for some appointments the opinion of the faculty is fairly widely canvassed, while in others the new man appears suddenly to the surprise of almost everyone. An equal amount of confusion seems to surround the termination of appointments. Evidently, it is quite false to speak of a system at all; it is rather "a kind of lawlessness, consisting of vague and incomplete rules and ambiguous and uncoded procedures."³

It would be very difficult to exaggerate either the frustration or the sense of insecurity which such a situation produces. No one knows where the real power lies, and so no one knows whom to blame when things go wrong, or to whom to turn in order to put them right. For the senior faculty the system of tenure allows a certain measure of security in an alarmingly chaotic power situation, but academic insecurity is caused only partly by fear of losing one's job. There are many other fears against which tenure gives no protection, and not least among these is the haunting fear that the whole environment in which one lives may be changed; that appointments may be made which seriously alter the standard of the department; that an important line of work may have to be dropped because of a sudden cut in the budget; that admission standards may be lowered so that there are more and more students struggling to do work with which they cannot cope. "This system of loose-lying power helps to account for the extraordinarily high incidence of conflict reported in the universities we studied and the widespread and passionate dissatisfaction of professors with the working of academic government."⁴

A similar sense of frustration and insecurity is to be seen also in the student body, where equally it is marked by a very high inci-

³ Theodore Caplow and Reece J. McGee, *The Academic Marketplace* (Basic Books, Inc., New York, 1958), pp. 206-7.

⁴ Caplow and McGee, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

dence of conflict and a profoundly critical attitude to the system by which the institution is governed. This leads to a general cynicism and apathy rather than to rebellion, because one of the results of the anarchic power structure is that no one has any clear idea whom he ought to rebel against. This apathy, it should be noticed, is the inevitable result of any fuzziness about authority, because any individual within the society is likely to be overwhelmed by a sense of helplessness whenever he considers the possibility of reform. Tyranny is both far more stimulating and also a far stronger cohesive force, for it tends to unite large numbers of people together in opposition to the tyrant.

The Unreality of Undergraduate Life

The helplessness, leading to apathy, of the student, however, must not be ascribed only to the system of loose-lying power, but also to the fantastic character of the world in which he lives, a world in which he moves to and fro from one side of the looking-glass to the other, dealing apparently with similar people working with similar methods, and yet finding a different philosophy governing each of the different sections of his world. Such a world is bound to have a sense of fantasy and unreality about it, and to breed an almost desperate insecurity because the inhabitants of it are never quite certain where they stand.

Thus, most of a student's time is spent in class or in fulfilling the assignments which have been given him in class, and the degree which he finally receives depends almost entirely upon the character of his classwork. However, it is a very widespread student complaint that the classroom material is irrelevant to life as they know it. Moreover, the attempts of the authorities to make the courses more relevant indicate strongly how completely they have misunderstood the students' complaint, because what usually happens is that the instruction is re-examined and re-formed until it is more nearly aligned to the character of the job which the

student is expected to perform when he leaves college, be it business, or advertising, or law-school, or television. By this means the courses become superficially more relevant, but actually remain just as irrelevant as before, since what is really troubling the majority of students is not the life they are going to lead (about which as yet they know very little) but the life they have to lead immediately outside the classroom door. They find themselves confused by very evident cleavage between the problems of the classroom and the other problems of growing-up, and dating, and getting married, and starting a family, all of which an increasing number of them do before they acquire their first degree.

Obviously, nobody is so stupid as to imagine that a professor of mathematics, or medieval history, should actually deal with the family tensions as part of his course, but almost everyone looks for a certain coherence between the basic philosophy governing the activity of the class and the activity of the family. They are bound, in fact, to ask for this coherence, since they soon find that the cleavage tends to produce a similar cleavage at home. A newly-married husband who spends most of his waking hours in a world of which his wife has no comprehension, and who, moreover, has to bring this world home with him when he settles down to write a term paper, quickly discovers that he is contributing little to family unity.⁵

The undergraduate college, as we have already seen, has as one of its major aims the giving of instruction, which is an important and necessary prerequisite for the life of any educated person. This is almost the only thing which it promises to do when the student registers and pays his fees. However, having made this promise, it then fails to carry it out, and perhaps the most damning criticism that one could make of the universities and colleges at the present time is not that they fail to maintain the standards and

⁵ Admittedly, a great many husbands are in this position in ordinary life, but in the student world this is aggravated by the fact that the husband's work costs money instead of earning it.

methods of the more ancient institutions of Europe, nor that they include too many subjects in the curriculum, but that they are so extraordinarily lacking in courage about the thing that they really aim to do, which is to train and to instruct. Indeed, one might be so bold as to say that there is only one area in the whole vast conglomerate of a university campus where thorough training and instruction can unfailingly be seen, and that is in the sphere of athletics. The coach, unlike the professor, has very few inhibitions about being ruthless when it seems necessary, or doubts about what he is trying to do—he is there to produce first-class athletes, and if he does not do it, he is likely to lose his job. The result is that though there may be much unpleasant professionalism, and even frank corruption, in college sport, yet first-class athletes are regularly and steadily produced.

This, however, is not true elsewhere, for though training and instruction are theoretically attempted in class, outside the classroom they are not given at all. Having committed itself to the task of instruction, the undergraduate college does an excellent job in athletics, and in some of the purely technical fields, but becomes increasingly hesitant in the more academic disciplines, and completely terrified in all matters of ethics, morals, and religion. Here the best that some institutions can offer is a superficial course in “social maladjustment” and the annual religious emphasis week, at which the authorities hope fervently that no one will be so tactless as to speak with any authority at all.

It will certainly be objected that this is an exaggeration, and so it is—but not much! The point is that you cannot in conscience train the students so efficiently in athletics, give them a modified form of instruction in class, based upon the system of carefully regulated assignments and straightforward factual examinations which obtain in so many colleges, and then suddenly allow them to embark upon the absorbing academic search for truth in matters of morals and ethics. If you do, you have betrayed them.

Of course, it may be said that such instruction would be an in-

tolerable interference with the free development of the personality, and that the differences of opinion on these subjects render it impossible for anyone to speak with authority upon them. But differences of opinion in other subjects do not necessarily prevent the teacher from being authoritative. A college does not require agreement about the investiture contest before it allows a man to teach medieval history, nor does it ask for agreement within the Political Science department on even so thorny a topic as Zionism before it permits a course to be taught on the Middle East. If there are both Arabs and Jews in the class, the issue is more explosive than any normal religious issue, but the instructor is not told to be silent for that reason.

Further, it is hard to see how authoritative instruction in morals, ethics and behavior, or even in religious beliefs, would be an intolerable imposition upon the student's personality, unless it is to be argued that his personality is something markedly different from his body and his mind, which seem to require this kind of instruction for their proper development. What most people seem to be afraid of is that kind of grotesque authority exemplified by Keate, the famous headmaster of Eton in the early nineteenth century, who once exclaimed to a doubting pupil, "Boy, you will believe in the Holy Ghost by five o'clock this afternoon, or I will beat you till you do!" But in matters of instruction authority is not of this kind at all. The authority of instruction has always a qualifying clause with it: if you wish to be proficient in this subject, then you must follow this advice. It is left, however, entirely to the other person whether he will follow the advice, or whether he will decide that the price is too big a one to pay. It is this kind of authority which is lacking on the campus today, and which is so desperately needed. The student, struggling with the problems of his daily life, needs again and again to be able to turn to someone with authority and experience, and say, "What am I doing wrong?" and when he does, he deserves to receive the kind of authoritative answer which he would normally receive in the gym. This is not

to say that he must not be asked to think things out for himself, and even at times be required to, for no true instruction is a matter of set answers to given questions, with no discussion allowed. Yet, behind every requirement that a student should wrestle with some particular problem by himself there stands the knowledge and the experience of the teacher, who, it cannot be said too often should be utterly humble before the person instructed and the subject, while never ceasing, all the same, to speak with authority.

As it is, the student is constantly expected to move uneasily between two worlds, or even three, and those who are responsible for him in the one, feel no further responsibility for him as he leaves them for another. The problems of his personal life, which may have a great deal to do with the kind of work he is doing in class, he is asked now to take to a professional counselor, who is often a member of the administration with no teaching duties at all, and who, therefore, is completely cut off from the world of the classroom where so much of the student's life is spent. As a result, a student's life today is often completely disorientated, and he is forced to pursue a curious, schizoid, sort of existence, subject to one set of pressures in one place and to a different set in another place. A very able student can sometimes discern the difference between the two sets of pressures and govern his life accordingly, but the great majority are incapable of this, and find themselves torn apart in the effort to adjust to both. This alone is quite enough to inhibit community, because whatever else may or may not be destructive of it, a true community of persons certainly cannot be composed of disunited personalities.

The Disintegration of the Community

It is difficult to think of any group on campus today which is contributing more than a temporary setback to the ever-increasing disintegration of the community, in which all the pressures are towards greater and greater specialization both of knowledge and

of function. The signs of this disintegration are evident in the desperate loneliness of so many students, the emotional disturbances, the poor work, the irresponsibility, the excessive drinking, the wild parties, and the constant apathy. One sees similar signs among every group in the college, in their defensiveness in face of every criticism, in the manner in which members of one group will speak collectively of "the faculty" or "the administration," even succinctly and brutally of "they." "Have you heard what *they* have done now?" is the kind of question which is asked, and such a question reveals unfailingly the shabby emptiness of much of the academic world.

The disintegration is to be seen also in the almost morbid concern of so many members of the administration for public relations and the fear that "they" may do something which will cause adverse comment in the newspapers or in the refusal of so many of the faculty even to consider a change in the curriculum lest the proposed change should be held to imply a criticism of what they themselves have been doing in class up to now; or again in the resentment of so many students over a rebuke for slipshod work or for a grade lower than was expected or possibly their uncertainty if the professor suggests that the textbook is not to be trusted on some point. So insecure is the structure in which many academic people live today that if you lay so much as a finger on any part of it, they cry out against you in alarm.

We are tempted, of course, to imagine that all is reasonably well as long as nothing very serious is happening, and to class as an "accident" the car crash in which four drunken students are killed returning from a distant town to the well-behaved campus where no drinking is allowed. We think that it is the sudden strains and stresses which destroy a community, and that if it can be guarded from these there is no great danger. But this is not true. A community which can be destroyed by a crisis is one that is already shoddy beyond repair, for a healthy community tends in such a time to come together rather than to break apart. The flaws in the

body politic which are exposed in a crisis are the flaws which are already there, the cracks which in normal times we assiduously paste over. Those who have lived through such a crisis know how the gaps between the already divided groups widen and refuse to close. Classes then become a kind of nightmare, in which the instructor has to consider every sentence lest it be misunderstood, and the cliques gather in the coffee shop afterwards to discuss "what *he* said this morning." At such a time one distrusts every conversation, and even those who once tried to bridge the gap withdraw their hands and step back into the security of their own group. Students are then found closing their ranks in opposition to the faculty, and faculty to the students, while each also opposes the administration.

The disintegration of the community does not, of course, proceed entirely unchecked, for man cannot live alone, and wherever community does not exist he is forced to try to produce his own. This is a natural and proper process when it is the binding together of originally isolated units into a coherent whole, but the present struggles to make a community out of the academic world do not have this character at all. Instead, they are largely an instinctive, defensive reaction against danger, a desperate attempt to bolster up a collapsing community by establishing within it other groups which have a certain measure of coherence. It is hoped that these groups, which are smaller and therefore more resistant to the disintegrating process, will help to stave off the total disintegration into isolated units, and that the collapse will be held at bay until measures can be put in hand to restore the shattered sense of community to the whole institution. Obviously, since this has already been said to be an instinctive reaction, it is not suggested that this hope is ever clearly articulated. However, that such a hope exists is made clear when the presence of the smaller groups comes under some kind of attack and has to be defended. On such an occasion the defense usually is that though the smaller groups may be far from perfect, they do provide some measure of community for people who stand in urgent need of it.

What must be questioned, however, is whether this defense is valid, whether, that is, these smaller groups do indeed show the marks of community, and whether they have sufficient solidity in themselves for them to be used as the basis for rebuilding the larger community. It will not have escaped attention that not all the groups that have been mentioned so far necessarily have any official status. Thus, the trustees found themselves afraid of the power of a small and indeterminate group of alumni, and anyone who has been concerned with the appointment of faculty knows how often the matter seems to be decided by a handful of people who do not have any official authority to make such a decision, possibly two or three of the faculty in department who bring pressure to bear on the chairman or the dean. The alumni group, it is true, may not even exist at all, because their existence has been merely taken for granted by the trustees and has never been put to the test.

However, the fact that their existence is presumed without any serious question is itself evidence that those who are concerned with the problem of the compulsory chapel rule are fully aware of the existence of groups of this kind, and do not feel called upon to question the existence of another. So much is this true that one would be tempted to say that one of the most characteristic features of the present academic scene, both among the faculty and among the students, is the formation of these small, unofficial groups or *cliques*. So powerful is this tendency that students complain of cliquishness even in quite small classes, and very early in the freshman year. Now, one of the most marked features of the clique is its essential purposelessness; it is not normally a group of persons who have come together with a definite end in view, for even if a clique may be said to be responsible for the appointment of one particular assistant professor, the members do not usually stay together to see to it that future appointments are of a high standard, and the next appointment may be made in quite a different manner. The handful of persons who comprise this clique are not, in fact,

primarily concerned with the excellence of the department; they are rather a huddle of frightened individuals seeking to defend themselves against the prevalent atmosphere of disintegration, a group of persons with no other essential purpose than to be a group. Thus, the clique is not the nucleus of a true community. This is shown by its marked lack of coherence, both within itself and in relation to the other groups around it. Its members have drifted together, and if the clique is subjected to any strain or severe tension, it usually splits and the members drift apart again, for they are held together only by the strong, but illusory, sense of "belonging" which membership in the clique gives them, at least for a time. So unstable is the clique, as distinct from the true group, that in order to exist at all, it must resist all external alliances, continuing for ever in opposition, unable to cohere with any other body to form a larger community. To be forced to grow would destroy it.

The formation of such cliques is a sure sign of a disintegrating community, because it is a desperate defense against complete collapse, against the terrifying possibility that the members will each be left alone in the crowd. It is, of course, a tendency to which every community is subject, especially as it grows larger and more complex, because no community has ever achieved a built-in structure which protects it against disintegration. Every community, therefore, is threatened by collapse, but not every community is in the process of collapsing. The defense against this tendency appears to be a constant care for the structure and the purpose of the institution, for if either is neglected disintegration is certain.

Pseudo-Communities: (a) Religious Societies

Some of the pseudo-communities of the clique type on campus may be entirely official, and among these must be included the fraternities and sororities, and the various church-related student foundations. Fraternities and sororities, of course, are long-estab-

lished features of the academic scene, going back to the earlier days of the undergraduate colleges, and therefore to the days when the college was a true community. However, the development of the church foundation is very much more recent, and has closely paralleled the increasing disintegration on the campus. Indeed, the foundations have been called into being very largely because of this disintegration, and because the churches, with their unending concern for persons, felt summoned to take some action which would save the person and, if possible, arrest the collapse. That they have lamentably failed to do so should be evident to anyone who is even slightly acquainted with the foundations, which, with a depressing regularity, exhibit all the features of the clique.

It may be objected by some people that these words are far too strong, and that the foundations contribute much more to the welfare of the community than they have been given credit for here. That there are some striking exceptions, as always, and that even the most pedestrian of them provide an escape for harassed individuals threatened by the confusion and unfriendliness of a big college campus must certainly be admitted. Yet, that the exceptions are anything more than exceptions, and that the escape is more than a mere escape, would be very difficult to prove. Of the good intentions of those who work in the foundations there can be no manner of doubt, but in a society with strong tendencies to paternalism good intentions are no guarantee of either excellence or relevance, and there is, unfortunately, a certain "vice of Christian charity" which constantly tempts us to confuse good intentions with achievement.

When we consider the achievement of the foundations, taking them as a whole, we must surely be less than happy at what they are doing. They are certainly as strikingly incoherent as any unofficial clique, and show themselves not only unable to cohere with other groups, even with other foundations, but unable to hold their own members, who have drifted into them because of insecurity and often drift out of them again before graduation. The

high proportion of freshmen and sophomores in these groups is one of the most disturbing features about them, and even the loyal adherents, who remain with the group until they graduate, usually cease to be members after that, even when they continue to study at the university. The list of Sunday evening meetings, moreover, reveals them again and again to be very largely purposeless, for there is very seldom anything like a definite program. Instead, a talk this week on the ecumenical movement is followed next Sunday by one on "Love, Sex, and Marriage," and this in its turn by a Bible Study session.

It is a common gibe that they contain only the misfits, the people who have not been able to make a team or a fraternity, but there is nothing wrong in this and the gibe is a foolish one. What, however, is very seriously wrong is that so often these people remain misfits, that nothing seems to happen to them as part of their experience in the foundation to turn them into effective elements of cohesion on the campus. They remain apart caring only for their own, and anxious to reach out towards no other body, able to exist only because they are apart. It is tragic that though the university may be growing in numbers with explosive force, little similar action takes place within these groups. The group which meets on Sunday evening tends to grow until it is a convenient and comfortable size, and there it usually stops, able to absorb each year only that number which will help it to maintain its size. It is very, very rare, indeed, to find such a group growing of its own nature, breaking off into other groups when it is too large for convenient discussion, and yet still adding to its numbers so that it has to divide again.

There are many, it is true, who may think this criticism brutal, but after some years of working within such church foundations I find it difficult not to conclude that many of them are contributing, not to the welfare of the community, but to its disintegration, because they take away some of its members and give them a temporary security outside.

Pseudo-Communities: (b) Fraternities and Sororities

The fraternities and sororities obviously contrast strongly with the foundations in that they have a very strong internal coherence, and often manage to develop an intense loyalty among their members. This is a notable achievement, and the fraternities and sororities are among the very few groups on campus which exhibit any of the marks of true community at all. This achievement should by no means be despised, even by those who have been denied access to a fraternity, for there are many who can testify to the reality of these small communities in the anonymous academic mass. Yet, it cannot be denied that the achievement has been made only at considerable cost, for the internal coherence is balanced by an external exclusiveness so extreme at times as to be really shocking. On some campuses, for instance, the internecine Hellenic strife has been such that members of one fraternity were unwilling to cooperate with members of another even for the purpose of winning a football game. On many the membership is hedged about with stiff restrictive clauses, and in far too many institutions a fraternity or sorority snobbery has developed which does real psychological harm. Moreover, the internal coherence is often maintained quite artificially, becoming, at least in theory, so demanding that in most fraternities there is technically no possibility of resignation. Clearly, such a rule cannot be strictly enforced, and the person who wishes to leave a fraternity can usually do so, but there are far too many of those who have left college who cannot bear to cut the umbilical cord, and on whom the fraternity still has a closer hold than is entirely healthy.

Criticism of this nature exposes the person who makes it to the accusation that either he is writing about something of which he is ignorant and judging merely from the outside, or else, if he is (as I am) part of the groups which he condemns, that he is biting the hand that feeds him. The accusation gains more force in a time

when the lack of community is so evident, because the accusers feel, and with much reason, that to be so severely critical of those groups which have some measure of community, however insufficient, is merely to hasten the disintegration. The tendency to cliquishness of the foundations and the fraternities is defended by many, not because it is desirable, which it manifestly is not, but because it is inevitable in an atmosphere of collapse, and that it is better to have cliques than complete disorder.

There may be some truth in this, but it is not the whole truth. Certainly when one considers the fate of individuals lost in this chaotic and divided academic world, one cannot but be conscious that for many of them a closed group of some kind has become nearly a necessity if they are to preserve any sense of stability and reality at all. The value of this personal contribution cannot be denied.

Yet, it is a palliative and, at the very best, an emergency remedy. In the long run it is likely to be very nearly disastrous if the best contribution any group can make to the well-being of the individual is to separate him from the large group to which he is supposed to belong, and give his life meaning only outside the larger group. It is yet another case in which men are driven, in defense against their own insecurity, to increase and strengthen the factors which have first brought about that insecurity, staving off the final collapse of the community by building the kind of structure which makes a re-creation of the community impossible.

There seems to be no way out of this dilemma, and the earnestness and the fury with which men defend the structures that do exist, suggest that in fact they are far more illusory than they dare admit. Once again we are caught in an "as if" philosophy; we talk and act as if there were an academic community; we defend the smaller communities as if their very existence guaranteed the reality of the larger one. Often our defense of our own group is a defense against despair; we do not dare to question it because we cannot contemplate the black abyss of emptiness into which we

think we should be cast if this, the last of our refuges against loneliness, were to be destroyed.

Perhaps it is better that we should live like this, pretending for just a little longer that we are bound together in one fellowship, because if we cannot continue to pretend, the truth would consume us. To come out boldly and say distinctly that there is no community would be to shatter the illusion, and we can give men nothing in its place. The critics and the iconoclasts may not necessarily be wrong, but there is no doubt that they are dangerous. Men have to live by their illusions, for they have nothing else to live by.

But what an irony it is that those who claim to search for truth should not dare to face the truth about themselves!

What Hope Is There?

It is clear that a certain pattern is now beginning to emerge, that within the so-called academic community men live inside a complicated structure of illusions, inhabiting not so much an ivory tower as a cloud castle of unreality. Thus every man busily asserts his own identity, according himself the virtues he admires but fears that he does not have. The student who is insecure creates an artificial image of himself as doubly tough, and either overtly does things which aim at convincing himself and others of this toughness, or secretly pictures himself in "Walter Mitty" situations. The professor is indeed rare who does not respond to the unconscious flattery of those students who accept his own estimate of himself, and he resents those who have another opinion.

Of course, they are in no way unusual in this, for it would not be difficult to show that very nearly every man today lives within such a structure, pretending to himself that he is other than he is, and that his world has values and a solidity which it does not in fact possess. Both the psychologist and the sociologist know this well, and are aware, moreover, that without the protection of such illusions men could hardly dare to live. Much indeed of the uninformed opposition to psychology and sociology comes from the secret fear that they will destroy the protective illusions and shatter the comfortable picture men have of themselves and their society.

What has been said does not, of course, apply with equal force

in all respects to every college and university. There are certainly colleges in which the criticism made during the last three chapters would have to be modified, and surely every college must be able to quote some evidence in defense of the reality and value of what is being done there. Many colleges could quote a very great deal. Yet what is being argued is that the judgment is at least in some measure universally true, and that the real academic malaise is that much of the work done in any college is forced by the system to be work without real integrity.

The question however now arises whether this is a peculiarity of the college world, and whether the lack of relation to the outside world, of which it is certainly accused, is the result of a self-deception of which the practical men of affairs outside do not partake. Is there something exotic about this structure of illusions, and is the condemnation true that much learning has made the inhabitants of the college mad?

On the surface, admittedly, it does not seem to be a purely academic disease, for men and women in every walk of life know how many are the compromises which they must make with truth, and how different is the ideal picture presented to the world outside from the reality within. Where the external picture is essential to the activity, where, that is, public relations and publicity matter, as in politics or advertising or the newspaper world, the divergence between the two pictures becomes more and more apparent. The tale, for instance, that this country conducts its international affairs faithfully and patiently through the United Nations, or the image of a great newspaper responsibly and powerfully affecting public opinion for the general good, are neither of them pictures which bear much relation to the truth. Indeed, one might well say that modern societies are characterized by a marked narcissism, by a real fascination with their own image, which they are tempted either to see as entirely admirable, or to remake persistently until they can so see it. That it is not entirely admirable to those outside the society is so obvious as to be hardly worth stating, and it is

clear that this preoccupation with the self-image is an escape into unreality of considerable magnitude.

It must not be expected that the causes of this escape into illusion are anything but complex, and attempts to provide a simple explanation are sure to be fraught with danger. Nevertheless, some kind of explanation must be sought, and it is possible that one can trace this phenomenon, at least in part, to a pervading sense of helplessness and frustration which seems to be one of the marks of the Western world at the present time. This sense of helplessness springs from an extremely strong, but also very poorly defined, feeling of being caught in a situation which no one controls, a situation which is the more furiously resented because the victims of it are convinced within themselves that it ought not to be so.

If we look, for instance, at the political scene, we find that even political decisions of the greatest importance, such as the use of the H-bomb, or the declaration of war, are taken by power groups remote from public control, and that public opinion exerts only the slightest effect on national policy because public opinion is itself largely controlled by the power groups. An interesting example of this could be seen, perhaps, in Britain in the Fall of 1956 when public opinion, so often supine, appeared to be unusually vocal, or in France and Algeria in the Spring of 1958, or in this country at the end of 1947 and during the early months of 1948. On each of these occasions there were all the outward manifestations of a powerful (though not necessarily an informed!) public opinion effectively influencing the policy of the government. The mass-meetings in Trafalgar Square, the demonstrations in Algiers, the flood of telegrams to the State Department, were in their several ways held responsible for the fall of Sir Anthony Eden, the rise of General de Gaulle, or the creation of the State of Israel.

So, of course, in some sense they were. Yet it must not be thought that any of these powerful activities could properly be

described as unfettered public opinion. The students of the London School of Economics who flocked with their banners to the foot of Nelson's column in an excess of anti-imperialistic fervor, and the committees of devout American churchgoers who importuned the American government for "justice for the Jews," were all acting, it is true, with the best intentions, and their idealism and enthusiasm must not be minimized. However, it would not be hard to show that their actions were conditioned ultimately, not so much by their convictions, as by the propaganda, some of it reasonably honest and well-meaning, some of it quite unscrupulous, of those who wished to use this fervor for their own political ends. In fact, those very groups in power who were held to be most influenced by this ebullition of public opinion have, all of them, when they have had time to catch their breath, directed this same popular opinion to their own ends. The skillful remaking of the popular image of the Conservative Party in Britain since the Suez debacle has been a most instructive display of political virtuosity.

Unfortunately, having established the existence of such groups, one cannot then go on to identify them. They are certainly not the elected representatives of the people, and the debates in Congress, or the House of Commons, or the United Nations are increasingly mere shadow-boxing, the real decisions being taken apparently by those power elites whose existence everyone suspects, but whose identity no one can discern. They are often identified, according to taste, as "the Establishment," "oil interests," "Madison Avenue," or the like. But to have made such an attempted identification is only to have explained one unknown by another unknown, and to have made no real progress at all. Every now and again this or that set of persons appears to belong to such an elite, but they have no permanence, and it would be quite irresponsible to pin all the blame on them.

The Possibility of a Meaningless World

Indeed, the more one examines the problem, the more the appalling possibility is revealed that one cannot really blame anybody, and that even those people who can be most truthfully described as making decisions are men whose hands are tied. They are themselves so conditioned by their environment, by circumstances, by other peoples' activity and opinions, by their own history, that they are no longer free agents. Thus we are faced with the truly frightful picture of an essentially meaningless world, of a world over which neither we nor anyone else has any effective control, a world in which quite probably the events which make a third world war certain have already taken place and cannot now be altered.

It would be quite easy to trace the same picture in almost any sphere, as for instance in the complicated structure of welfare capitalism with its mechanisms of monetary control to ensure full employment and the giddy pattern of credit living which is steadily enveloping the whole Western world. It is a system which cannot be said to be under the control of anyone, and for whose very evident weaknesses nobody can put forward acceptable solutions. Labor troubles persist in a world which, according to the theorists of some decades ago, should largely have removed the causes of them. Millions are spent on advertising to control the market, but advertising is itself controlled by the tastes of the buyers, who are themselves, apparently, the slaves of subconscious forces whose existence they do not even suspect.¹

One could develop this theme *ad nauseam*, but enough has been said to show that the helplessness of the professor or the student in the apparently meaningless academic grove is but a reflection of

¹ This is discussed in an interesting, though probably a somewhat exaggerated, fashion in *The Hidden Persuaders* by Vance Packard (David McKay, New York, 1957).

a similar helplessness throughout society. It is what Eliade has well called "the terror of History,"² and it is no new thing. It is rather something with which men everywhere have almost always had to come to terms. However, what makes it particularly terrifying at the present time is that during the modern era the West appeared, at any rate partially, to have been set free from this terror. The scientific and industrial revolution, the ascendancy of France until 1815, the isolation of America, the quite phenomenal economic and political power of nineteenth-century Britain, all conspired to give to the peoples of these countries a sense that they were in effective control of events, and to give to the other Western nations the hope that they also might in course of time aspire to be so. As country after country throughout the world came under Western influence, so this hope became also theirs.

As a country, however, began quite clearly to lose power, it became an exception, for it could hold this hope no longer, and was forced to realize with a mixed feeling of surprise and resentment, that events were irresistibly slipping out of its control. Once more, with the disillusionment, came in the sense of helplessness, of being swept along by an uncontrolled and uncontrollable flood of events in whose pattern, or rather lack of it, men could no longer discern any meaning. The disorderly constitutional history of France since the Napoleonic wars, the post-World War II emigration from Britain, and now the startled discovery by the Americans that the political power which they had acquired is not the real power that they had hoped to have—all these are marks of the return of the terror.³ One may see the same thing in the newly independent

² Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return* (Bollingen Foundation, Inc. Torchbook Edition, Harper and Bros., 1959), p. 139.

³ An excellent example of the realization of the lack of power is the manner in which a journey to Moscow had become almost *de rigueur* for candidates for high political office, both in Britain and in America, until the Summit Conference of 1960. Thus we recognized the importance of the Kremlin as a power group in our own internal political elections.

countries of Asia and Africa, where the frequent surrender of power into the hands of one man reflects in part a desperate attempt to compel someone to control history, and to postpone for a while that day when men must recognize that the independence of a country does not set the people free.

Response to Meaninglessness

In such a disintegrating situation man reacts in two contradictory ways. On the one hand he tries to take some aggressive action which will provoke events, and thereby demonstrate at least his partial control over them, and on the other hand he submits to events, retreating into a protective and self-effacing camouflage, thereby hoping to escape the brutal attention of the fates. Neither of these reactions in the long run, however, is effective, and both are indeed humiliating. Man soon finds that history cannot be defied, and that whenever he attempts in Promethean fashion to wrest the control into his own hands, he is chained to the rock and painfully and miserably consumed. But the retreat into conformity is no less frustrating. It does not in fact defend men from disaster, and those who practice it are then driven to revenge themselves, by means of a revolt against society, on a craven conformism which denied them the protection it had seemed to promise.

A curious custom in the villages of the Middle East may perhaps be quoted as illustrating in some sense both these reactions. There, at the time of an eclipse, the children come out into the streets banging pots and pans together to "frighten away the whale that is swallowing the sun." What has now become a childish game is, however, the last relic of one of the most ancient beliefs in the world, the belief that at the Creation the gods vanquished the dragon of chaos, and as a symbol of order set the sun and moon in the sky to perform their regular and appointed functions. But men lived ever under the fear that chaos could return, and when the chief symbols of order seemed to them to be being attacked, they

took up arms against the dragon, fearing that he was not dead after all. It was not enough for them to have explained history; they must always be on the watch to control it, lest chaos and meaninglessness return.

There are many other examples which could be quoted, both from mythology and from history itself, of this double response, on the one hand of attempts to explain history, to give it both a meaning and a pattern to which by considered action men may conform, and on the other efforts to subjugate history and bring events under the mastery of man. In our sophisticated fashion we are not different today. It is a commonplace that one of the chief attractions of Communism is that it claims to give order in place of chaos and to give a meaning to history. Hence the servile conformism which so shocks the outsider, and which to those inside does not seem to be conformism at all, but rather the intelligent adjustment of rational men to inevitable events. Yet at the same time as claiming to have discerned the inner meaning of history, the Communist is driven to try to bring it under his authority, making himself the master of the world, and inflicting upon the wounded dragon of chaos a final destruction.

Every revolutionary movement has repeated this pattern. Before the revolution lies the world of chaos, a senseless and amorphous jumble of events, without form and void. Thus the Muslim speaks of *Ayyam el-Jahaliyyeh*, the days of ignorance and darkness before Muhammed; the Emperor Ch'in had all the books of his time destroyed because before him the history of China could have had no meaning;⁴ and the self-confident young Israeli speaks of the British Mandate in Palestine as the "pre-state period" and accords it neither creativity nor significance.

Then comes the revolution, the creative act by which the dragon is killed and the world becomes charged with meaning. Order takes the place of chaos. Yet disorder couches at the door, and the

⁴ The destruction of books is a persistent feature of revolutions. Witness the fate of the great library at Alexandria at the time of the caliph, 'Omar.

dragon waits to consume the newly created sun and moon. Hence he must be destroyed, or, if this cannot be done, he must be chained. So the Muslim armies sally forth to convert the world by force of arms; the Great Wall is built to separate the Chinese firmament from the restless, inchoate steppe, and Israel smashes the Egyptian forces in Sinai.

But history cannot be brought under authority in this fashion. In course of time the explanations prove insufficient and the control ineffective. The meaninglessness of events becomes ever more apparent and the terror more overwhelming. In such a time man becomes both more aggressive and more conformist. On the one hand he tries, either by military might or by some more refined means, to exercise a temporary control over events, and on the other he elaborates and polishes his adjustment to them. The trigger-happy aggressiveness of both the United States and of Russia result from the humiliation and alienation they feel in a world which seems to them increasingly meaningless and irrelevant; so does the virulent nationalism of Asia and Africa; so do the Beatniks and the Teddy Boys; so does science fiction; and so also, though it is not so often pointed out, do the extravagant efforts towards the so-called "conquest" of space and the hoped-for "mastery" of the weather.

In their own way also the organization man, the well-attended church, the ranch-type house, and the concern with the group are the product of this same alienation, for they represent the attempt to conform, the insubstantial refuge from a shapeless and incoherent history. Either by the grotesque domination of some part of nature or events, or by retreat into that temporary pattern of society which he already knows, man tries to assert meaning and validity where events themselves would compel him to believe that there is none.

The H-bomb in particular is that which reduces to meaninglessness the victory of Russia and the United States in World War II. By its threat of final extinction, by its promise of a generation of

idiots, by its ability at one and the same time to make war seem both more and less likely, the Hydrogen Bomb has destroyed beyond recall the familiar pattern of history which had already been shaken by Dunkirk, Belsen, and Pearl Harbor. Yet, exactly because it is that which threatens to destroy all meaning, men are driven to try both to embrace it and to hide from it. The so-called "Nuclear Club" and the proposed "Non-nuclear Club" represent his aggression and his retreat, and both, it is easily seen, are policies of despair. It is once again the story, with which by now the reader must be well acquainted, of men driven by their own frustration and humiliation to strengthen and fortify the very thing which brings their humiliation about.

It must not be supposed that this is done without thought or reason. Indeed, man at this stage devotes considerable attention to the nature of his society and environment, and to the workings of history, in the attempt to give a pattern to his life. In fact, it might be reasonably true to say that at no time is he more fascinated by society than when society is disintegrating, and at no time does he seem to talk more of planning and of blueprints. The sociologists and economists of today had their counterpart in the historians of the period of waning Muslim power in Spain. Yet at this stage, so convinced has he become in his own mind that basically the world is meaningless, he often does not search for meaning any longer, but seeks instead to understand the technical processes of society. Certainly there are exceptions, men of the stature of a Saint Augustine or an Ibn Khaldun, but the very fact that these exceptions are so often a protest against the general run of intellectual thought of the time serves rather to confirm the judgment. The sterile gnosticism which so often passes for learning today, the strange desire for salvation by the right formulae, the expression of even the most complex political situations as "problems" for which men must find a "solution," mirror in no slight fashion the pseudo-religions of the Roman Empire or the magical ceremonies of Ancient Egypt. We may see examples as much in the spate of

books on American history as in the similar spate of books on the University (of which this perhaps is one!)

The possibilities of self-deception and error in this kind of study, which is concerned rather with the external technical questions than with inner significance, are obviously considerable, but a more disturbing feature of the present time is that they seem to lead increasingly to plain and evident mis-statements of fact, so that what may be, or what should be, is presented as if it were what is.

Thus society in the past lived by its myths. These might be as archaic as the story of the whale and the moon, as simple as that of George Washington and the cherry tree, or Robert the Bruce and the spider, or as complicated as the myth of government by the people. This did not matter. What did matter was that these were the ideals and theories by which men lived, and for which, if necessary, they were prepared to die. In this form they were presented, not as statements of present fact, but as symbols of that towards which society was striving. Young Americans were thereby urged to be truthful just as young Scots were urged to persevere, and men were ready then to give their lives, not to defend an already existing democracy, but that government by the people might not perish from the earth.

Today these simple but mystic truths have been replaced. Ideals belong incorrigibly to the future, and they do not fit well into a society which is fascinated by a study of itself in the present, and which can hardly conceive that there is any future because it can see no order in events at all. Moreover, men who are skilled in the examination of externals and techniques can quite easily show that at this level none of these myths is valid. A whale is not the cause of an eclipse, George Washington cannot be proved to have cut down a cherry tree, nor Robert the Bruce ever to have studied the habits of the spider. Instead, the ideals are transferred to the present. The Scots tell the world that they are persevering; the Americans (and the Russians) that they are peace-loving; France insists

that she is a great nation, not that she aspires to be; and Britons claim that they are no man's slaves, no, not even within the Atlantic Alliance. Statistics are adduced to show that religion is booming, and even our failures are made to proclaim our greatness, for we claim that only the great dare admit that they have failed. De Gaulle, Macmillan, and Eisenhower have all been at pains to emphasize this kind of statement, which in seductive terms is repeated daily in the press and the popular magazines. The myth has now become a lie.

The Reflection of the World in the Academic Community

If we now return to the academic community in its garden enclosed, we see, therefore, that its illusions are not a matter of a special situation, but rather the dreary reflection of a general scheme. Gone are the days when the faculty did not care what other people thought of them, and were more concerned with the standard and integrity of their own work. Instead there is no college or university today which, for financial reasons if for no other, does not feel compulsively the need to present to the world a picture of its activity which, because it is idealized, must be spurious. No college could possibly be as good as any college's prospectus says it is.

This dichotomy between the ideal and the reality is perhaps less serious, however, in this area because it is offset by a certain public caution against being taken in, and only the very gullible would take a college prospectus at its face value.⁵ What is considerably more alarming is the growing tendency for the ideal image which a college presents to the world to become also the picture it has of

⁵ Nevertheless, there are many gullible people in the world, and one cannot be entirely happy about the evident *suppressio veri* of which so many college catalogues are guilty. How many colleges, for instance, are there which list courses which they no longer teach?

itself. Then deception becomes self-deception, the lie in the soul for which there is but scant chance of forgiveness because there is so little likelihood of repentance.

There is in the academic world the same sense, or perhaps fear, of meaninglessness which can be found outside. There is the same dread of seriously questioning the society in case the lack of meaning is disclosed, and there are the same desperate efforts to impose a meaning on meaninglessness by concentration on techniques, by the deliberate creation of an attractive self-image, and by the same rigid conformism, the same submersion of identity as a means of defensive camouflage.

The technical side of college education has been carefully studied, and there has certainly never been an age in history in which the techniques by which knowledge is transmitted from one person to another have been more painstakingly examined or more ruthlessly engineered into a system. This is an age of linguistic analysis in philosophy, and group dynamics in education, valuable and helpful studies as far as they go, but hardly to be described as deeply concerned with the problem of a meaningless universe. It is an age also in which it is entirely possible in many institutions for a student to acquire a Bachelor's degree without having been asked at any time to write an essay or any other piece of extended prose, an age in which "truth" has become "what the book says," as inevitably in all objective examinations or mechanical forms of instruction and testing.

It is certainly an age of conformity, and an abundant literature on the subject of the modern college or university has criticized "The Careful Young Men,"⁶ who are the modern undergraduates. It is usual in such writing to rebuke them for being careful, but they would be other than normal if they were not. In face of a universe without apparent meaning, threatened by a future of such fantastic change and development that it seems to have lost all

⁶ Title of a series of short articles in *The Nation*, March 9, 1957, pp. 199-214.

rhyme and reason, and at the mercy of a society and system which nobody seems to control, who can reasonably blame them for wanting to play it safe, and for placating the unpredictable fates as far as possible?

They are not, it must be conceded, encouraged to revolt by their elders, whose idea of the perfect undergraduate society seems not far removed from that of "rich men, furnished with ability, dwelling peaceably in their habitations," giving therefore no trouble to the business office, to the dean, or to the professor. Many seem afraid that if even moderately revolutionary views are expressed the gleaming image of the idealized academic community may be tarnished and they would be grateful if nothing concerning the college should appear in the newspapers except in the form of a press release from the publicity department. One finds, for example, in some quarters a not too well defined wish that only that will be taught which has a direct and quite obvious relation to the idealized image of the American way of life. Therefore, to teach *about* Communism is likely to be suspect, and a course entitled "Totalitarianism" is frowned upon lest it give the wrong impression to those who read the catalogue.

Yet with all this conformism goes a strange, muted aggressiveness, a discreet banging of pots and pans to frighten away the dragon. There is a noisy insistence upon student government, excessive drinking (both among students and faculty, though usually not together), querulousness about salaries and housing, dishonesty in examinations, all of them efforts to bring some small part of the apparently meaningless society under one's own control, and thereby proclaim, at least to oneself, that one is master of events. But it is an escapist form of aggression, seldom intentionally carried to lengths which might possibly shake the fabric, since one must at all costs keep meaninglessness at bay. Men can provocatively declare, *Fiat justitia; ruat coelum*, only when they are fairly sure that the heavens will not fall. When the foundations seem a little shaky, the less said about justice the better, for in this kind of

situation the provocation must never be so loud that the fates can hear it.

The Difficulty of Exposing Illusion

This excursion into the world outside the university has been necessary in order to establish the identity of the university with the world. On the one hand this identity of experience is important because without it there would be some justification for the common belief that the atmosphere of illusion is peculiar to the academic scene, a kind of intellectual mountain sickness from which the men of action who labor on the plains are free. But it is important also on the other hand because without it there would be no opportunity of contact between the intellectual and the practical worlds, and because it establishes the fact that there is some form of relationship between the two worlds, despite the common complaint of the students that there is none.

However, since the relationship depends upon the illusory character of both worlds the chances that it is likely to be productive seem to be slight. Indeed, the nature of this relationship is such that the problem is revealed as being far deeper and far more serious than might once have been supposed. The tenor of the student complaint is usually that there is a "real" world outside the classroom to which the "illusory" classroom teaching seems to be largely irrelevant. But this is now seen to be false. It is relevant because both worlds partake of this same character of illusion, but for the same reason it remains, and must remain, supremely and quite incorrigibly irrelevant. There can obviously be no question here of improving and remaking the teaching by relating it more closely to the world outside. To do this would be to guarantee yet more certainly that it would remain irrelevant. There is at the present moment little hope that this relationship will alter, for only that teaching can be relevant to illusion which is able clearly and intelligently to show that it *is* illusion. Any attempt to relate directly

to a society which is a structure of illusions, and which is increasingly the victim of its own self-image, is inevitably condemned to be itself illusory.

The university or college, therefore, has small chance of revealing to the world the lies which the world tells itself, because it is unable to examine its own lies. We who are outside are apt to be surprised when the university faculties in a totalitarian regime do not expose the errors of that regime. But we should not be surprised since very little criticism of our own illusory structures comes out of the universities of the West, and for the same reason: the faculty do not possess outside the structure any valid position from which they dare take the structure apart and examine its foundations. Hence what we are tempted to believe to be the despicable silence of university professors in Nazi Germany or Communist Russia is a silence we should certainly repeat if we were to be put to the same test.

Consequently, we need to ask whether there is any possibility at all of such a position, whether any hypothesis today can provide the necessary security or whether any institution possesses it. Here, perhaps, a hint may come from an unexpected quarter, though one which should be of real interest to the University since it is of a largely academic character. This is the field of Biblical criticism. It may be felt that suddenly to introduce at this point something which has such definite religious connotations is unashamedly to produce the *deus ex machina* like a jack-in-the-box. It must, therefore, be insisted that there is no intention whatever of calling in the next world to redress the balance of the old, but merely to say that within the academic world itself a curious fact deserves more attention than it normally receives: that there is, at least, one field of academic inquiry in which the most ruthless, and potentially very dangerous,⁷ inquest upon illusion has been conducted almost entirely by those to whom the illusions meant most and who held

⁷ Just how dangerous may be realized when one compares the place of the Church now with its standing in the mid-nineteenth century.

them very dear. Indeed, it is very difficult to think of any other discipline in which such a sustained and destructive enquiry has been conducted into that which provides the basis of the discipline. The Christian Church has often been accused, and with very good reason, of almost boundless self-deceit, but in this one area at least the attack upon her illusions has been carried on almost exclusively by her own members, while, save for rare exceptions, the rest of the academic world has shown a lack of interest worthy of Gallio himself.

It may be—some would hold that it undoubtedly is—a counsel of despair, but in view of this fact it is not unreasonable to ask, even at this late hour, whether there may not be that within the Christian Faith which permits the necessary and destructive questions to be put. At any rate, it will do no harm to look.

The Christian Argument

The name "Christian" is today used so loosely that if we are to examine the Christian argument, it is necessary first to define the sense in which the word is being used. In many circles, even academic ones, a Christian is often spoken of as if he were merely someone who followed, or attempted to follow, the teachings of Jesus. In view of the intellectual ideals of the academic community, however, so loose, and indeed so inaccurate, a definition will hardly do, since there can be little doubt that throughout the centuries to be a Christian has meant to belong to the Church, and to accept the Christian creed. Scholarly integrity, therefore, requires us to say that a Christian is a baptized person who stands squarely within the tradition of the Christian Faith.

To be a Christian in this sense means to begin with God, not merely with the statement that there is a god, but with the more emphatic assertion that God is. The Christian makes this assertion, without any qualifying article, definite or indefinite, rather in the same manner in which we say that there is air in the room. To omit the article suggests that it is inconceivable that there should be no air in the room, that air should not penetrate to every part of the room, or that there might possibly be two separate atmospheres between which a man might make his choice.

So the Christian says, succinctly and comprehensively, "God is," and he means by this, not that he has successfully concluded his

search for God, has discovered, examined, and identified him, but that God exists utterly beyond, and independently of, man, and that men can say he exists only because he has displayed himself to them. Indeed, the Christian assertion is that God alone exists, and that everything else which appears to exist is actually derivative. This assertion leads him almost at once into a conflict with the scholarly world, which prefers to keep such words as "real" and "fact," for phenomena verifiable within human experience. The Christian, however, can hardly help saying that God alone is real, and that what is verifiable entirely within human experience is not "real" at all in his terms, but has only the appearance of reality.

The Christian is not here putting forward a private opinion, but is emphasizing his identity with, and inclusion within, the major stream of Christian scholarship, which received its first, and certainly some of its classic, statements within the pages of the Bible. Here, from the pens of a very diverse group of writers, we have a remarkably consistent picture of the nature of God, and one which has played so determinative a part in Christian thinking that even today theology which cannot be called in some true sense "Biblical" theology cannot properly be described as Christian theology at all. This applies as much to the Old Testament as to the New, for one of the now assured results of Biblical scholarship is that there is no such thing as a New Testament concept which is not rooted and grounded in the Old.

In the world of the Biblical writers we find ourselves in a world in which God is master, in which his majesty, his absolute power, his livingness, his righteousness, holiness, and glory are the essential reality. This concept is somewhat foreign to the modern mind, which tends to resent authority and to think of royalty as either wrong or somewhat ridiculous. In the Bible, however, the whole trend is the reverse, to maintain the divine majesty and the absolute authority.

The learned may say, of course, that the Biblical writers were sociologically conditioned and that they described God in terms

of their own society, as the tribal sheikh and later the absolute monarch, and that we must express God in terms of the society in which we live today. But this is not true. Of course, the writers of the Bible used the language and the thought forms of their time, but the important thing about them is the consistency with which they stand outside their society. God is not, in Biblical thinking, a projection of the oriental potentate. He is essentially other than that. Obviously the writers must use the terms of king and judge and shepherd, especially in view of the concreteness of Hebrew imagery, but this does not mean that it was their familiarity with these things which caused them to think of God being something like them, only more so. Indeed, the shepherd image does not become common in the Old Testament until after pastoralism has ceased to be the way of life of the majority of the people. It is rather the exterior judgment upon the society by prophets, such as Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Second Isaiah, who were themselves part of this non-pastoral society. Equally in the New Testament, Paul may describe the action of Christ in terms of the redeeming of slaves, but he very definitely does not mean that to be a slave of Christ is like being a slave in Roman society, only more glorious. Certainly, also, there is no evidence that the New Testament authors even began to think of God as in any way an apotheosis of the Emperor.

In other words, whatever language may be used to clothe the Biblical ideas of God, the ideas themselves come in from outside, and are not merely projections from within the society. God and his activity are always essentially other than, even a direct contradiction of, the metaphors and similes which are used to describe them. The royalty, majesty, glory, power, and absoluteness of God are therefore his inherent possession, and not temporary human conceptions of him, which may be discarded in a society which knows no majesty or royal authority.

God is, and he is absolute, and all reality originates with him. Moreover, he is One. Anything else that is said about him, how-

ever true, must always come to terms with this fact. Whatever faults the Jewish people of the New Testament period may have had, they knew that they existed to maintain this essential truth, and they were ready to die rather than entertain any other possibility. Six hundred years later Islam came into existence as a protest against the failure of the Christian community to maintain this truth with equal authority, and this central tenet of Islam is still proclaimed five times a day from every minaret to a world which has not grasped it. The Christian community has still not managed to bring their later understanding of God in harmony with this basic concept, and this lies at the root of much of their present confusion.

The Christian Faith is trinitarian, that is to say that it maintains a belief in God, the Three in One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Such an assertion, however, inevitably exposes the finite human mind to the dangerous, and manifestly false, belief in three equal gods. This conclusion is so abhorrent that in revulsion against it men often tend to overemphasize one aspect of their Faith as a means of unifying the others. The present tendency in the West is to exalt the Redemption, to speak in terms of peace, freedom, security, and salvation, that is to exalt the Son, at the expense of Creation and Sanctification, of the loyalty they owe to their absolute Master and of the cleansing fire of utter purity which must purge every single man if he is to live in freedom. An artificial unity is developed by presenting the whole Trinity in terms of only one Person. The Son is exalted, and the Father and the Spirit are lamentably neglected. This is not permitted either by the Christian creeds or by the thinking of the New Testament. In both the fulness of God is kept clearly before the reader's eyes, and every meeting with God must be not only with the Redeemer and Savior, but with the Sanctifier and with the Creator, the Bringer into being, the *Father* in the true sense of the word, that is, the Initiator of existence.

Time, Space, and Eternity

Now, part of what he initiates and brings into existence is time as well as space. This is often a stumbling block to popular understanding of his activity, because though men can usually grasp that God must be, as it were, outside space, they find it difficult to conceive of him as outside time. Failure to do so has, in fact, led to much sterile argument about predestination and free will, because such argument often assumes that God is as imprisoned within the time-process as we are.

Naturally, the very expression "outside time and space" is misleading, because it is itself spatial and represents a spatial relationship. However, any other expression is likely to be equally misleading, which is one reason why it is very nearly impossible for theologians to say exactly what they mean. Possibly the best analogy is that of the relationship between a two-dimensional drawing and the three-dimensional space which it represents. The drawing has a certain reality in its own right, to be sure, and if we were entirely confined to the two-dimensional world of the drawing, we could presumably concoct a fairly satisfactory explanation for the relationship between the lines of which the drawing is composed, just as it was possible for men to explain the relationship of the heavenly bodies when they believed that the earth was the centre of the universe. However, in actual fact the lines in the drawing have significance and reality only in so far as they express the three-dimensional world, and two lines which in the drawing meet at an angle of 40° represent to the three-dimensional observer an angle of 90° seen in perspective. But a two-dimensional observer could never see the angle as anything else except 40° , and would be bound to treat the suggestion that 40° really meant 90° as either frivolous or deceitful.

Moreover, if a two-dimensional figure in the drawing were to

come alive and be transported, still within the same plane, into the three-dimensional world, he would find himself in a quite terrifying fantasy. He could move up and down, and backwards and forwards, but he could not stretch out so much as a finger to right or left. If he came in contact with even so ordinary an object as a square box of crackers, he would inevitably misunderstand it. One side of it, perhaps, he could grasp, because he could feel and measure what he could see, but though he might be able to see two of the other sides, his exploring fingers would be able to make no contact with them, and so, for his purposes, they would be mere illusion. He would never even dream that the fourth side existed.

To add another dimension, therefore, to the thinking of those who cannot comprehend it does nothing to increase reality for them. In fact, it destroys it. This is equally true if one introduces the dimension of time to someone who is unused to it. He can understand that only one person, in his three-dimensional experience, can occupy one chair. This, to him, is very reasonable. If you then introduce the time dimension and say that from that point of view the chair is being occupied by hundreds of people, in fact all the people who ever have sat, or ever will sit, in it, he does not think that you have increased the reality of the chair. Instead, he is bewildered, because you have taken a perfectly commonplace, everyday object like a chair and have turned it into something fantastic.

Admittedly, this is an analogy, and, the percipient reader will hasten to point out, a spatial analogy. It is consequently unsatisfactory, as all analogies are. However, it is something like this that the Christian is trying to say when he explains that the eternal world is outside, or beyond, time and space, and yet comprehends time and space, and gives them their reality. When he uses such terms as "spiritual," he does *not* mean something other than, and opposite to, material, but something which includes and goes be-

yond the material. It is to matter what solid geometry is to plane geometry. The spiritual world is for the Christian not less real, but, if we can use such a phrase, more real than the material world.

This eternal, or spiritual, sphere is the sphere of God, and to meet God is therefore always a meeting with eternity, with the real reality. It follows, moreover, that the meeting must always be with God in his wholeness, and that it is impossible to be brought into contact with a part of God, however much it may be true to say that we only partly perceive him. The limitation is always upon us and never upon him. This is often but dimly apprehended at present, but it is of fundamental importance for the academic world. We have an almost incorrigible tendency to think of God's creative activity as limited by the time process to the past, so that the Creation has become for us a past, and completed, event. Moreover, we tend to apply it almost entirely to the material universe, as if the powers of the Creator were exhausted when matter came into being.

The Living God

But this cannot be so. God always is. He does not grow old or weary, nor does his nature change. Moreover, to be, according to the Christian understanding, is not to rest in eternal changelessness; to be is to live, and to live is to act. It is not idly that the Bible describes him continually as "the Living God," for nothing so much becomes him as action. Just as no description of God must limit his unity, so no description may circumscribe his activity. Any faithful reader of the Bible cannot but come away impressed with the overwhelming sense of power and movement, almost stunned by the pace of it all. It is only silly hymns which speak soothingly of "cool Siloam's shady rill" and the "still small voice of calm," but then the authors of such hymns had clearly not consulted the Biblical stories to which they were referring. It is

for this reason that to speak of God's "mighty hand and outstretched arm" often conveys more of the truth than to say, however accurately, that he is "without body, parts, or passions."

We find this strange today, and even, curiously, somewhat blasphemous, because we continually neglect the Hebraic root of our culture for the Greek. It is perfectly true that far more students take courses in religion than in the classics, but yet the thought forms of our society are Greek rather than Hebrew, and a student who begins to wrestle with Plato and Aristotle in Philosophy 101 enters a world which is, at least vaguely, familiar. The same student, if he takes an introductory course in the Bible, finds himself in a world which is almost entirely foreign. It is so foreign that he usually cannot accept it, and of the very many students taking courses in religion in our universities and colleges only a few come out of them impressed with the power, majesty, and dominion of God. I have even had students who accused me of inventing this picture of God, though the slightest acquaintance with the Bible should have convinced them that I had done nothing so clever.

Together with this concept of the wholeness and the power and authority of God goes the understanding of his perfection, that is, of the "Holy One." The question here is not one of moral goodness, although moral goodness is a necessary result of this perfection, but rather of that characteristic which, in speaking of Christ, the Christian would describe as "sinlessness." So accustomed are we now to thinking of sin as being primarily, rather than secondarily, a moral matter that it has become difficult to think today of sinlessness as being more than moral perfection. What, however, is meant is an all-pervading integrity. It conveys something of the perfection of a true sphere, for from whatever angle a sphere is seen, it is the same. Moreover, the very slightest protuberance on its surface makes it immediately not a sphere, reduces it at once to something merely spheroid. So the Christian may readily describe human beings as "godlike," and the created world as partaking of the nature of its Creator, but to him whose perfection

alone is absolute is it possible for a Christian to give the name of "God." To apply this title to anything else is idolatry.

This is one place where Christian thought takes issue with a very great deal of religious thinking, and this is really the basis of the Good News. Admittedly, the term "Gospel," the Good News, is normally kept for that special activity of God which was displayed in Jesus Christ, but though that activity may properly always be described as news, it cannot be affirmed to be good news except upon this foundation, upon the affirmation that he who has acted is the Creator, he who alone is active by nature, the only real reality, the absolute perfection, the eternally dynamic Power. It is good news because it asserts that there is no other power, and that there can be no question of dual forces eternally in tension with each other, however helpful such a concept may be for normal human purposes. It is Good News because it insists that evil must of its nature be transitory. Perfection demands perfection, and cannot tolerate imperfection; active perfection must continually be at work transforming all derivative realities to conform with perfection ("reconciling the world to himself"—II Cor. 5:19).

Clearly, too great an insistence upon the idea that perfection is the only true reality might lead us into asserting, as much religious thinking does, that evil is illusory. From this folly, however, the doctrine of Creation must deliver us. It is by no manner of means a self-evident doctrine. Indeed, it might almost be described as the most fantastic assertion which the Christian makes, the supreme contradiction of human logic, and the necessary foundation of the whole Christian argument. The fantastic character of the assertion lies not in the statement that it was creation *ex nihilo*, that that which is was produced from that which is not, that non-being issued in being, though this is in itself a startling claim. Rather the enormity of the argument resides in the affirmation that the Infinite Power, the absolutely Unlimited, produced limits and finiteness, and that henceforth, at least in this universe, the Eternal works within time, that the unrestrictable activity of God is now restricted.

To say that God did this is to say that he contradicted his own nature. But this is absurd. It is an offense to all reason. Yet Christian experience forbids a lesser statement. Consequently, it follows that if we are not to say that God contradicted himself we must say that it is God's nature to act in this manner, and that the character of God is therefore self-denial in the true and literal sense of the word.

But the creation must partake of the nature of its Creator; what is made cannot but reflect its maker. And so the inner secret of all that is stands revealed as showing that self is to be affirmed only by the denying of self. True integrity is the absolutely consistent application of this and can be achieved only by him whose nature it is so to live. The moral derivative of this is humility, and already in the Old Testament God is described as humble.

Since the creation reflects the Creator, it is not surprising that thinkers in many religions have insisted upon the necessity of humility and the terribly destructive effect of pride. Yet, it is only upon a sound understanding of Creation that humility is seen to be something more than a moral duty, and to reflect the nature of the Creator himself. In fact, it is this same understanding of Creation which delivers us from the paralyzing limitations that a system of morals places upon us, for what must otherwise appear to us merely as moral requirements, as obedience to commandments, can now be seen as the necessary function of our nature, the application, within the terms of our own limited freedom of action, of the nature of him who is eternally active. The inevitable effect of any weakening of the understanding of Creation, of any confining it to something in the past, any form of Deism, of turning God into an absentee landlord, is to reduce religion to legalism or a mere moral system. This can be seen in Islam, where the strong concept of God's majesty allows no room for his humility; in New Testament Judaism, where the decline of prophecy marked a weakening in the picture of the Living God at work in his own universe; and almost everywhere in Western Christianity today, which is deplorably deistic, and therefore moralistic through and through.

History as the Drama of God's Activity

It is the Christian argument that God is so consistently active in the universe that one must say that the whole of history is in his hands. People often object to this idea because they find it difficult to think of God as soiling his hands with the kind of history which they have seen at close quarters during the last twenty years, or possibly because they feel that God should not interfere in this way. Both objections assume that God *intervenes*, as it were from time to time, usually when things show signs of getting out of hand, and no small number of our prayers for peace suggest by their wording that they have this assumption behind them. But it cannot be said too often that this is not the Christian concept of his activity. In the earlier part of the Bible, it is true, there is some suggestion of the idea of God coming to his people when they are in need of him, but this disappears as the revelation of God becomes more complete. God is then seen to be continuously active, not withdrawn though watchful on Mount Seir, but utterly involved in the events of the time, which, for that reason, are misunderstood by all the people who are unaware of him. According to the Christian understanding, God is not merely active in history; he initiates history, and all events in some way proceed from him.

This explains what is a source of surprise to some people, and even shocked surprise that immediately after recounting the glories of Creation the Biblical narrative plunges straight into sin, and having plunged stays there, wallowing in sin for chapter after chapter. The disobedience of Adam and Eve is followed by the murders done by Cain and Lamech and the great wickedness in the days of Noah, the drunkenness and indecency of Noah himself, the deplorable behavior of his sons, the pride of the men of Babel, the lust of Pharaoh for Sarah, the strife between the herdsmen of Lot and Abram, sodomy in the Cities of the Plain, the incest of Lot and his daughters, the dishonesty of Jacob, and the

scandalous massacre at Shechem by Simeon and Levi. All these are recounted before two-thirds of the book of Genesis is complete, almost no revolting sin being omitted, and the reader feels that none of it is very edifying. Yet it is the basic material of the Biblical story, a picture of what man, left to himself, becomes, and of the material with which God is prepared to work. It is because it is the nature of God to create and to make all things new that the picture is not one of black despair.

So the drama proceeds. The things of this world are turned upside down: the tyranny of Pharaoh becomes the means of the Exodus and the periods of Israel's glory are the occasions of God's judgment upon them. There is very little that we would necessarily have thought of at the time as noble or uplifting. The trek across the wilderness seems to have been a wearisome and exhausting journey, and the entry into Canaan a bloody business. The period of the Judges was brutal and often degrading, and the kingdom brought much misery to the ordinary man. Invasions, plague, famine, and tyranny strode up and down the Palestinian world, and these are the things which the Bible says God does. It is not that he is able to work despite the sordidness and brutishness of the material, but that this sordid and brutish material is the very stuff with which he works.

Very little of this appears in the Biblical passages that are chosen for reading in church, and good, church-going people are often tempted to think that God must be bound, either by some kind of moral duty or else by pragmatic necessity, to work mainly through those who recognize him and believe in him, but this is not the contention of the Biblical writers, who see his handiwork in the cruel onslaught of the Assyrian army, or the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, "that bitter and hasty nation." There are many today, for instance, who believe that God must support the Western world against the Communists who have openly rebelled against him, but to say this is to say that the Communists have

acquired their power by accident, or because they have managed to seize it by rebellion from God, or because God is not really active in all the affairs of man. All these false arguments are denied by the Biblical faith, which maintains that power belongs to God alone, though he may have entrusted some measure of power to certain groups of men, that it remains for ever within his control, and that whatever men may strive to do they cannot thwart him.

Nevertheless, it has always been part of Biblical thinking that there are some people through whom God works in a special sense. They are a selected group, or, to use Biblical terms, a "chosen people." In the Old Testament period this selected group is the Jewish nation, among the most battered people in the world's history, clearly in no sense selected for worldly distinction, and in the New Testament the claim is made that a new group has been brought into being, the Christian community, to take over the function of the Jews. This function is to be the people in whom the nature and character of God is displayed, so that all men may see it and may perceive, as completely as human beings can perceive, what previously they had but dimly apprehended. The Jewish people failed in this essential function, though the record of the "God-fearers" in the New Testament suggests that the Jewish witness had brought many people much nearer to understanding about God than they had been before. The Biblical story is one of the progressive narrowing down of the Jewish nation, because of its imperfections, until there is only one man, Jesus of Nazareth, whom the New Testament authors assert is to be identified with the whole of Israel.

It cannot for one moment be maintained, either that the Christians have in any way deserved the honor that had been laid upon them, or that the Christian community has succeeded where the Jewish community failed. Indeed, there would be many who would argue, with good reason, that the Christian failure has been no less serious, and that as the Christians have been right to apply the

function of the Jews to themselves, so they must also apply the judgment. It is not the place here to speculate upon the nature of that judgment, but only to say that it can surely be no less severe.

The Central Event of History

Nevertheless, there is a real difference, for in between the two groups took place the crisis, the birth, life, death, and rising again of Jesus of Nazareth, the central event, concerning which the whole New Testament is a discussion. This event, according to the Christian claim, took place at a definite date, and in a definite place, in history. It was, from any purely human point of view, a singularly minor event, unnoticed by the historians of the day, and yet it is held that this single event changed the whole shape of history, which is now nowhere exactly the same.

The effect of this event can be measured only in the light of the human predicament, within the framework of which it took place. This predicament is the inability of man to be in any effective sense what he really is. He is part of creation, a thing among things, drawing his whole significance from his createdness, from his relationship to the Creator. Yet he is unable to act in this manner. His apparently innate tendency is to act as if he were independent, with an authority which was proper to himself. But he cannot have been created like this, and how it came about is difficult to say. The extent to which another possibility was once open to him must always be merely a matter of speculation. Yet, that another possibility did once exist is basic to Christian thought, and C. S. Lewis has done well to remind us, in *The Problem of Pain*, that the *fact* of man's starting at some point to turn from willing obedience to God must not be confused with the *picture* of it in the Book of Genesis. At some stage in his development, however, he must have become aware, even though vaguely, that he was free to make a certain amount of choice. He may, for all we know, have long chosen only to do as God desired, but somewhere along the line

he began to choose otherwise, and now the present fact is evident. Man cannot, even within the framework of his own natural limits, achieve the measure of perfection which those limits would permit. He cannot live a life of all-pervading integrity.

He can certainly make approximations to it from time to time, and perform acts of quite considerable self-denial, but he cannot prevent, even at the very moment of the act, that self-centered thought which undermines the act, the thought of how good he is to be acting in this way. In fact, it would probably be true to say that the nearest he ever comes to achieving his true nature is when his will is not fully master, when a mother acts for her child with that same primordial instinct that one can see in animals, or when someone forgets all about himself in the satisfaction of serving others. These are certainly noble achievements, but they are something other than an act of deliberate intention.

The Christian claim is that in Jesus of Nazareth God and man were in perfect union, and that in him God did in man what man himself could not do, lived a life of true integrity, of open-eyed and willing self-denial, and that because no man is ever an island unto himself, this action is ultimately effective for all men. No man can be isolated from the effects of it.

It is usual to divide this central event into at least three events which form part of it, the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. This is for human convenience, since the limited human mind cannot grasp the whole concept at once. The New Testament, however, continually links these three themes, so as to make clear that they are integrally related, and must never be separated from each other. They are all part of the humble self-giving of the Maker to what he made, and display that same contradiction, that denial of self, which is to be seen in the Creation.

In the Incarnation, the act of taking upon himself the nature of man, God again works through his creation, the Infinite power within material limits, the Eternal within the framework of time. It is, in terms of, and within the limits of, human experience, the

carrying out of that self-same activity which in the creation is carried out in terms of, and within the limits of, the universe. In every sense it fulfills the creation: it brings creation to completion; it confirms its validity; it is the assurance that the created universe is not something illusory or a prison from which we must escape, but an essential part of God's purpose within which he is content to work, and within which, therefore, we must work.

The Incarnation, like the Creation, is an act of utter humility, and because of this, it is itself an act of creation. It transforms the created world, making all things new. This Christians have always seen to have been effected in the Crucifixion and Resurrection, though they have been careful to insist, as the Gospels themselves insist, that the Crucifixion is not a separate and different part of Christ's life from the period of his ministry. Rather, the whole of his life, from beginning to end, is to be seen as Crucifixion and Resurrection. To be a witness of the Resurrection, and to know only Christ crucified, are the marks of an apostle.

The insistence upon the Crucifixion is justified because in human terms, in terms, that is, of the limits within which this activity of God is worked out, self-denial, self-giving can proceed no further. Jesus Christ, it must be remembered, is held by Christians to be really and truly God and really and truly Man—no other definition is true to their experience—and human experience knows nothing which can go beyond death in degradation, the humiliating end of a slave, exposed to the world and left to rot, because there is no further use for him even as a slave. Man can do no more towards handing himself over utterly than going to this limit; nor can God go beyond it while he is acting within the human framework, because within this framework there is no further experience.

It is the Crucifixion and Resurrection which put an end to all talk of dualism, because at this point in history the power which is in opposition to God is seen to be no power. The tension may be a real one in our experience, but the integrity of Christ's life

show it to be no part of the eternal reality, and the Resurrection confirms this. The integrity of this life, moreover, enables the Christian to affirm that God in Christ took upon himself the nature of Sin and yet was without Sin. Sin, once again, is not primarily a moral fact. The moral connotation of Sin is tremendously important, but it is the secondary application of the meaning of Sin within the framework of human behavior, and might almost be said to apply to sins rather than to Sin. Sin, basically, is not so much what we would call immoral as dishonest; it is the erection of an entirely false structure of independence, the development of a whole "as if" philosophy, whereby we say, "Let us act as if we were not created things utterly dependent upon the One who made us." It takes on moral significance when we realize that the decision to build this structure has been entirely human.

Redemption and Reconciliation

Jesus Christ, the Christian maintains, lived within this structure, and accepted all the implications of this fact. He made concrete decisions, and took definite actions, which involved him in identifying himself with the structure of revolt. This is of primary importance, because we are often tempted to believe, as for instance in discussions on international affairs, that somehow we can find a course of action which is "right," and which therefore is not involved in the revolt structure. When we find that we cannot, we are then equally tempted to withdraw into some kind of pietism and refrain from any kind of action at all. It is therefore significant that the Gospels insist throughout on Christ's activity, his resolute decision issuing in actions which his contemporaries say only too clearly had all the marks of sinful human nature. He was condemned as a sinner for this reason, and from their point of view those who condemned him were justified. He had identified himself with Sin by his quite deliberate refusal to avoid the re-

sponsibility of action within a sinful world, and so they had no alternative but to call him "sinner," for so, in their sense, he was—but only in their sense.

Nevertheless, he was without Sin. At no point were his actions guided by any other purpose than a deliberate, unwavering intention to pursue a life of unaltered self-giving, of true self-denial. The four Gospels all agree that the greatest pressure was brought upon him to modify this stand, "to do the right thing for the wrong reason," and none of them makes any secret of the strain it was to him to maintain this purpose unchanged, not so much as dented, throughout thirty years of earthly life.

To be "sinner," and to be without Sin, is to destroy Sin, to make it of none effect, to break its paralysing power. So the Christian is both compelled by the Crucifixion to view with deeper seriousness the deadly quality of Sin, which brought his Master to this torment, and enabled by the same Crucifixion to say that man is now set free from Sin, that he is no longer paralysed by its existence, that he can now act and make decisions. So he is enabled to speak of man's Redemption.

It is further part of the Christian affirmation that the Crucifixion achieved not only his Redemption, but also his Reconciliation with God from whom he had been estranged, the whole process which he would call the Atonement (quite literally: at-one-ment), whereby God and man are made once more at one with each other. This he would say because in Christ's life this complete self-giving was carried through to the end. Jesus Christ, the Christian would say, is really man, and never did he cease to place himself unreservedly in the hands of God. Likewise, says the Christian, Jesus Christ is really God, and never did he cease to place himself entirely at man's disposal. Because there was no point at which either ceased to give himself to the other, and said, "I can go no further," they became indeed at one, not because either conquered, but because each completely surrendered himself. By this the Christian does

not mean either the disappearance of man into divinity, or the dissemination of God throughout his creation (an immense amount of both Eastern and Western religious thought is ruled out here), but that God and man each retains his own distinct identity, and deliberately, willingly, and unrestrainedly, hands it over.

The action of God in Jesus, in whom dwells "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9), is, as has been said, one with the act of Creation. In this act all things are made afresh and the beginning of this new creation is to be seen in the Resurrection. It is not always sufficiently realized that this is itself part of the act of humiliation, the humiliation and self-offering which is beyond death, and it is this which shows it to be part of the creative act. For our own convenience we are inclined to underline the degradation and the willing self-offering of Good Friday in order to bring into more vivid contrast the triumph and the new beginning of Easter Sunday. It is not wrong that we should do so, because this is how it must seem to us, but we must never forget that the Cross itself is the triumph, or, as the Fourth Gospel would put it, the *glory* of Christ, and that in the Resurrection Christ does not depart into heaven, but continues to place himself at man's disposal. The writer of the Fourth Gospel rightly saw that it was an act of humility for Christ to pray, as if he had been nothing more than a man (John 11:42), and for him to appear still on the earth after his Resurrection is no less humility. This is why we must beware of any attempt to "spiritualize" the Resurrection, to remove it completely from the sphere of the material universe. Though it clearly transcends this world of time and space, and belongs to the eternal world, yet it includes time and space, and God continues to work through, and for the sake of, what he has created.

That this is so is to be seen in the existence of the Church, that entity which itself partakes of the nature of the eternal world. This other world, as for convenience we sometimes call it, is for those who only know this four-dimensional world of time and

space, fantasy and illusion, but to those who can move in the other dimension it is altogether more solid. The Christian does not imagine that the inhabitants of the eternal world look at this one and say that it is an illusion, as presumably Christian Scientists think they do. He thinks of them looking at his world as part of their world, as we would look at the world of a book, and as making the same kind of comment that the outside person would make of the world that was "real" to the person in a picture, "It's real, all right, but it's flat!"

The Christian would argue, and it is essentially the New Testament argument put in modern terms—that there are already people capable of experiencing and moving in this other dimension, and that they find it an extremely exciting experience. These people are the Christians themselves, using the word in the Johannine sense of "to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). Such people are special people, a "new creation," a different kind of human being from the kind that existed before. This sounds a very conceited claim for a Christian to make, and so it would be if he claimed that it was from himself that this ability had proceeded, or that no one else could ever have it except him. But he says nothing of the kind. His claim is that it was entirely the work of God and that all men are potentially of this kind, by virtue of Christ's activity, if they will but receive it. Christians are, by virtue of their Baptism, by their offering of themselves to Christ, by their receiving of him in Word and Sacrament, endowed with power, and in particular the power to live in this world the kind of life that belongs to the other. They are not necessarily on the surface better people, at any rate to the outward eye, but they are people in whom Christ can live, and in whom he can continue unbroken his work of creation, his utter giving of himself. This is why they can live this kind of life, because, and only because, he is living it in them.

The Unbroken Activity of God

At the risk of being repetitious, it must be insisted that *the Christian is not here making a claim about himself*, although what he says may certainly sound as if he were. What he is saying is that the unhindered work of God continues, as always, through his creation and that the Christian community is the channel through which he works, though he is, of course, always at liberty to work through others if he chooses. This community is God's work entirely and continues only as long as it is fed and nourished by his activity. In them he takes the earthy, material universe and transforms it to conform to that perfection for which he made it, using for this purpose ordinary bread and wine, ordinary water at Baptism, the writings of ordinary men and women, the daily activity of countless persons who have no value in themselves, but are valuable only because they are used by him. For Christians to claim credit for their work would be a foolish blasphemy, and even a slight understanding of God's sacramental activity must forbid it. What is ordinary becomes special only because it is used by God.

It follows that since the members of this community are held to be different in kind from other men, the straightforward application of Christian ethics to everybody, or the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount as teaching capable of universal application, is entirely contrary to New Testament thought. Such thinking makes nonsense of the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection, because it renders them irrelevant. It reduces to meaninglessness the New Testament argument that "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (I Cor. 15:14).

Nevertheless, Christians remain men and women, part of the new creation, and yet part also of the old, which is essential to God's purposes. They belong in very truth to the world of time and space, and are in unceasing danger of continuing to use the

rebellious thinking of that world. So real is this danger, and so great the pressure upon them, as it was on Christ himself, that no position of security within the old creation can be granted to them, lest they are deceived by it. Their only security lies in God's faithfulness and in his sacramental activity, and their only confidence in the surrender daily, even hourly, of all their self to him who surrenders himself to them. "Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself, alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit" (John 12:24).

For this reason there are provided the means of grace, upon which generations of Christians have been nurtured, and whose power, in their experience, remains undimmed. These are the sacraments of Baptism, or admission to this new community, and Holy Communion, or the feeding and strengthening within the community. There is also Confirmation, private and corporate prayer, reading of the Scriptures, and godly conversation among those who know this way of life. It is convenient and helpful to think of man's obedience to the Word of God as his recognition that he is a created thing, and therefore his response to the Father; his reception of the Sacrament, and obedience to the fellowship, as his recognition that he is one of the new community and his response to the Son; and thirdly, his private mediation and obedience to his own conscience as his recognition that he is responsible alone before God and his response to the Holy Spirit.

It is helpful, but it is not without danger. God must not be divided, and it is the whole power of God which comes upon him as he reads the Scripture, or receives the Sacrament, or communes within his own heart. Yet this must never cause him to say, "Because I go to Communion, I do not need to read the Bible; or because I pray every night, I do not need to go to Church." In part this is because he cannot, for his own well-being, have any place where he can stand over against God and say, "Now, I have done what is needed." Because he is still within the structure of revolt, were he to find such a place, it would destroy him. But in part

also it is because God works always through his creation, and even when he is active in it, the creature remains something other than the Creator. The Bible is not God himself, nor is the Church, nor the Sacraments, nor any man's conscience, and to elevate any one of these things into an absolute to be served and obeyed for its own sake is idolatrous. There is always the threefold authority for the Christian, the Church, the Bible, and his own conscience, but none is master of the others. The authority of each exists only in so far as it is used by God for his own purposes.

The Christian confidence, then, resides in this, that there is only one reality, the Creator himself, and him the Christian has come to know as active, as determined on the well-being of what he has made, and as achieving his whole purpose by being of what he is, the eternally self-giving. The Christian has come to know him thus through Creation, Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection, and through Bible, Church, and Sacrament. For this reason he can now say with Paul that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

The Relevance of The Argument

The last chapter set forward, albeit very briefly, some of the main points of the Christian argument, as maintained by the Christian community throughout the centuries. The question now arises, therefore, of whether this has any bearing upon the structure of illusion in which man lives, both inside and outside the academic community. It needs to be made quite clear that this is the question, rather than any other, for it is not the purpose of this book to try to prove that the Christian Faith is true. Instead, it is to put the somewhat more limited question: if it were true, would it be relevant to the situation discussed in the first four chapters?

If we could accept Whitehead's oft-quoted, but inaccurate, description of religion as being "what a man does with his solitude," if we could agree that it is essentially a matter of personal belief with which no other person should interfere, if it were demonstrable that what are normally called "science" and "religion" are dealing with entirely different spheres of knowledge, then it would be unprofitable to go any further. Religion might then still be of interest to anthropologists and sociologists as a manifestation of human activity; there might be a need for it to be taught in a department of Religion as one section of the whole realm of human thought, and one on which there is a considerable and profound

literature, but as a matter of concern to the entire academic world, and as a primary source of information concerning the academic malaise, it would have ceased to have significance.

Now, this assumption, though possibly convenient and certainly very widespread, is not only false; it is plainly and demonstrably false. *Any* religion which has commended itself to a large body of men, and which has stood the test of time, must, without any question, overlap with the presuppositions of a large amount of the secular studies of the university, because no such religion can escape dealing at considerable length with the nature of man and the character of the material universe of which man himself forms a part. Admittedly, there are those types of religious thought which maintain that matter is illusion, or else, if not illusion, evil. The adherents of these religions must, then, seek to escape as far as possible from the material world, and with such men the scientist cannot but part company. To this extent "religion" and "science" would be separate. Yet even in such a case it seems hardly possible that they ultimately could live at peace, for basic to the religious argument is a dogmatic statement concerning that which is the subject of the whole of scientific study. It could be only by a temporary gentlemen's agreement that such a fundamental conflict would not be brought into the open.

If disengagement is not possible, then, for the world-forsaking religions, how much less possible must it be for a world-embracing religion, and in particular for that cognate group—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—which share a common belief in the doctrine of Creation, and which claim that the material universe is part of the eternal purposes of God and under his direct authority. Each of these religions has produced its mystics and its solitaries, but this has never been the task of the majority, who have rather been commanded to make full use of the material world because it is the work of the Creator. For the university or college, therefore, to ask of those who adhere to these religions that they keep their religion separate from the world of the laboratory and the class-

room is to make of them a request which they cannot in conscience accept and still remain true to what they believe.

The blessings with which the devout Jew is expected to undertake each activity emphasize the concern of the Jewish religion for every aspect and facet of life in this world. This, indeed, has been since Old Testament days an acute problem for the Jewish conscience since the necessity of being "holy" was in continual conflict with the necessity of living in this world. It was resolved only by producing a world in which he could live, a separated community in postexilic Jerusalem, a ghetto in medieval Europe, or the *Judenstaat* of which the early Zionists dreamt. Within this community properly understood, the religious could live the worldly life they were meant to live. "The *talmid hacham*, the Jewish sage, the scholar and rabbi, whoever he might be—the *rov* of a townlet or the Gaon of Vilna—did not live on the periphery of his society, but at its vital centre; he was respected, not because he was *different* from his fellows, but because he was more of what they all were."¹ Nor is this less true of Islam. "As familiar as the prayer mat to the traveler among Muslims is the doctrine that religion pervades all life to the student of Islam. Repeatedly in classical dogma and in current apology the reader comes upon the fact that Islam is totalitarian."²

If this, then, is true of Islam, which has specifically rejected the doctrine of the Incarnation, and even the fact of the Crucifixion, it cannot but be true for Christians, who understand these events within the framework of material history as being the very base and substance of their Faith. Within the limits of the campus, where no form of intellectual argument or discussion may be barred, it is not only permissible but even necessary that some should maintain that the Christian Faith is empty and that Christians themselves are deluded, for Christians as well as others need

¹Israel Knox, "Reform Judaism Reappraises Its Way of Life" in *Commentary*, December 1954, p. 508.

²Kenneth Cragg, *The Call of the Minaret* (Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 141.

continually to be forced to think out whether their argument is false, or no. Yet, it would be manifestly dishonest to fall back on a second line of argument, and say, "Even if it were true, it would be none of our concern." So inextricably mixed is the Christian Faith with this material world, that if it were not relevant to it, then it would not be true.

It remains, however, to examine in what sense it is relevant. How does this Faith, if true, affect the problem of the malaise which was explored in the first four chapters? The answer to this may be said to be threefold: (a) the Christian Faith itself provides a large part of the foundations upon which modern higher education, properly understood, is built; (b) it provides also that position of security from which every presupposition and possible illusion (including those of Christians themselves) may be examined and, if necessary, overthrown; and (c) it gives meaning and significance to humiliation, insecurity, and apparent chaos.

The Christian Faith provides the basis of the academic activity.

The universities and colleges of today may trace their descent from the medieval institutions, but the education given in them no longer follows the medieval pattern. Instead it is largely the child of what for convenience we call the scientific revolution, and that other, sometimes known as the "administrative," revolution, by which the scientific method was applied to the whole of life, so that today an overwhelming amount, both of the research and the instruction, in many institutions even in the humanities and the arts, is based upon the methods of the scientist. Yet behind these methods lie certain assumptions which the modern student takes so much for granted that it is only with difficulty that he can be persuaded that they *are* assumptions, and that any alternative possibility exists. These assumptions have their historical basis very largely, though it must be admitted not entirely, in the affirmations of the Christian Creed.

Certainly scientific studies have been in no way peculiar to the

Christian community, and of this the ancient Greeks and the medieval Muslims are sufficient evidence. Nevertheless, within every other scientific society there seems always to have existed some obstacle, some serious and immovable barrier to the universal application of scientific methods and thought. In the Christian West, however, though it drew its inspiration, one must concede, from the treasures of Greek thought and the work of the Muslim universities, it has so happened that every obstacle was in course of time removed, and the researches of the scholarly few sparked a revolution among the many.

It must not be imagined that this conclusion was reached easily, for within the Christian community there have always been the two groups, those who extolled the *via activa*, and those who maintained the superiority of the *via contempliva*. Those who held the latter view tended to fear scientific study as distracting the mind from the true knowledge of God. In the end the former view, itself no less a part of the Christian tradition, has triumphed so effectively that in the Protestant West the *via contempliva* is in real danger of being smothered altogether. One thing alone would mark the new approach to knowledge as a complete revolution in thought, and this is the conviction that *all* men should be taught to think in this fashion, and that *all* could be trusted with the secrets of the universe. Previously it had been normal to believe that enquiry was for an élite and that it was better for the majority to accept the conclusions of the learned. This is an extremely persistent belief, and it cannot be said to have been eradicated even yet within the Western educational system.

Now, among the assumptions upon which modern higher education is built we may, perhaps, include the following: (a) that the universe is inherently worth studying; (b) that the material world is not evil, and that we need not fear what our researches may disclose; (c) that nature is orderly; (d) that Truth is one, and that ultimately there can be no conflict between what is known to be true in one sphere and what is known to be true in another; (e) that the human reason is a sound means of acquiring knowl-

edge and ascertaining the truth; (f) that there is a relationship between cause and effect, and that therefore the experiments of one person may be tested, and either confirmed or refuted, by the experiments of another; (g) that the experimental method is itself satisfactory as a basis for establishing any hypothesis; (h) that in any conflict between them ideas must be subordinated to facts; (i) that ignorance is dangerous, and that there is a duty to discover and make known the truth; (j) that antiquity does not of itself accord validity to ideas, however venerable they may seem to be.

Any person is certainly at liberty either to add to this list, or to suggest that these theses are altogether too simple and that they need to be qualified. Nevertheless, it would surely be true to say that it has been upon some common basis of belief of this sort that the immense development of modern knowledge and research has been enabled to grow. Moreover, wherever else these beliefs are to be found (and it cannot be said too strongly that the Christian Church can make no claim to their unique possession), they are all integral to the Christian Faith, and it is doubtful whether any other society than a Christianized one has held them all to be true. They have not always been held with equal force, even within the Christian community, and have indeed been much disputed. There are those within the Christian Church who might dispute them even now. Yet in general it is probable that the majority of Christians in the West would now subscribe to them all.

The first three have their foundation in the Judaeo-Christian doctrine of the Creation, in the belief that everything that is came into being solely as the result of the direct fiat of the Creator, and that it cannot but reflect his nature. The pre-Christian Jewish world seems to have taken a long time to throw off entirely the general Semitic belief that something preexisted the moment of creation, though it is probable that the prophet we know as the Second Isaiah no longer believed this. By the time of Jesus, however, the majority had also advanced as far as this, and the Jews

seem to have been the first people to have rejected as intolerable any form of demiurge, or anything in the nature of a "blueprint" for creation. The Will and Word of the Creator alone were effective. Since he is by nature good, and indeed "good" by definition is that which reflects his nature, the created universe cannot itself be evil. The steadily repeated refrain of the first chapter of Genesis is that day by day God looked at his work and said, after the manner of a builder or an artist, "That's good." Moreover, it is orderly. Despite the popular beliefs of an agricultural people, at the apparent mercy of an unpredictable and capricious deity, the Prophets maintained insistently that God was by nature consistent, and that he was steadfast in all his dealings, and in the end their views prevailed.

This basic Jewish belief received confirmation and reinforcement in the thinking of the Christian Church. Those who believed that God had become part of his creation in the Incarnation, and had instituted the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, could not then forever despise the material universe. Further, the events of Christ's life seemed to them to have confirmed abundantly the trustworthy orderliness of the Creator who, in accordance with his unshakable purpose, had visited his people. Jesus Christ they proclaimed to be "the same, yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

So greatly have we been delivered from the ancient fears that it is now almost impossible to think ourselves back into that atmosphere in which they were still cogent, when men dreaded to examine too closely inanimate nature lest some uncontrollable evil be unloosed. The majority of undergraduates, in fact, seem to imagine that it is self-evident that the universe is not evil. Yet, as the Christian argument is forgotten or neglected, the old panic fear returns. Much of science fiction is built upon it, upon the hidden dread that "out there," somewhere in space, there may be a "Thing," an essentially malevolent force, bent upon our destruction. In more sophisticated circles men have been heard to sug-

gest that it is unwise to probe too deeply into the secrets of the atom, since they are not for the eyes of men.

That truth is one has as its ultimate authority the statement that God is one, and that therefore there cannot be two sources of truth. One finds this belief as strongly in Islam as in the other two great monotheistic faiths, and though an uncompromising monotheism undoubtedly poses serious problems in the way of explaining the existence of evil, it does provide an extraordinary stimulus to study and research, since it asserts categorically that truth cannot conflict with truth and that if at any time two "truths" should appear to be in opposition, we must strive without ceasing to reconcile them. Of this the great tradition of scholarship in all three religions is witness.

Yet, there is always the danger with monotheism, and especially one which affirms, as these three do, the unhindered activity of God, that reason may be despised, and revelation exalted at its expense. This has certainly happened, and together with scholarship there has gone a parallel anti-intellectual tradition. "What have we to do with *genera* and *species*?" asks St. Thomas à Kempis. "He to whom the Eternal Word speaketh is delivered from many an opinion."³ But against one Saint Thomas we must put the other, for the steadfast determination to make full use of human reason has undoubtedly been one of the marks of the Body of Christ. Nor could it be otherwise among those who held that the full manifestation of God had been displayed in Jesus Christ, "Perfect God: perfect man of reasoning soul and human flesh subsisting,"⁴ and who, in conflict with their previously held beliefs, were compelled to understand the Greek world with all its learning to be a necessary and integral part of their community.

The doctrine of a necessary relationship between cause and effect is explicitly rejected by orthodox Islam, a rejection which was the

³ Thomas à Kempis, *Of the Imitation of Christ*, Bk. I, Ch. iii, 'Of the Doctrine of Truth,' v. 2.

⁴ Athanasian Creed. Translation in the 1928 Prayer Book of the Church of England.

logical result of the rejection of the Incarnation as an intolerable limitation of the absolute authority, freedom, and unity of God. It is held that God always *has* decided that a stone will fall to the ground; but that he always *will* so decide, or that he *must* so decide, the orthodox Muslim, certainly since the days of the Mu'tazilite controversy, could not say. Yet an incredible amount of scientific argument and discussion falls to the ground if this cannot be maintained. If Professor X at, let us say, Johns Hopkins publishes in some learned journal the details of his experiments and the conclusion that he has drawn from them, and if Professor Y of Tübingen then repeats these experiments, both professors, and in fact the whole scholarly world, accept as axiomatic that if properly conducted the same experiments should yield similar results in both places. If they do not, a prolonged, and often acrimonious, argument develops, but no one questions the basic assumption, or suggests, however devout he may be, that the divine authority and freedom must not be limited in this fashion. For the Christian the problem is less acute than it is for the Muslim. He knows, of course, that he himself must never by anything that he says or does, limit the power and authority of God, but he knows also that it is not a new thing for God to impose limits on himself. Christ, he is told by St. Paul, "emptied himself" (Phil. 2:7) at the Incarnation, and he understands God to come to him within the limits of the sacrament, as in the ancient world he had acted within the limits of a single people. Therefore, he is not surprised by the argument that in working through an orderly universe God limits himself. This is the same God he has always known.

The necessity and the validity of the experimental method receives further support from the Judaeo-Christian belief that manual work is not menial work, and that the body, being part of God's creation, is not inferior to the mind or the soul.⁵ The Jewish in-

⁵ This is true even though 99% of American Christians seem to think it is inferior and that at death the soul escapes from the body. "The American Way of Death" reveals, perhaps more than anything else, how greatly the church in the West has forgotten the concept of the Creation.

sistence that all rabbis should learn a trade and work with their hands, the article in the Creed which maintains the Resurrection of the Body (however this is to be interpreted), and the oft-quoted injunction, *laborare est orare*, forbade either the philosopher or the mystic to remove men entirely from healthy contact with common or garden material things. Further, the salutary idea that it did proud man no harm to be degraded disposed of any belief that if the philosopher's role were "higher," it would therefore be desirable. The patient labor of the workman, carving a miserere seat to the glory of God, and the royal washing of the beggars' feet on Maundy Thursday, were in their own way as much part of the slow preparation for the scientific revolution as the disputations of the scholars.

To the relation of ideas and facts we must return later, but for the moment this point must be made: it is not unconnected with the Judaeo-Christian argument that the revelation of God was made primarily through *events*, and that the teaching of the Prophets and Apostles was an explanation and exposition of these events. In the Christian community this has been strengthened by the idea, so evident in the New Testament, that what Jesus Christ taught draws its validity from who he was and what he did. On the basis of this belief that, to use theological terms, there is a distinction between *didache* (or teaching) and *kerygma* (or the proclamation of events), the *didache* being built upon the *kerygma*, it has been possible to expose the Faith to searching enquiry, since it permitted the essentially scientific question to be put, "It this teaching a sound and legitimate deduction from the events?" This is not, of course, to equate the *kerygma* with the results of intellectual enquiry, as if men could by searching find out God. It is rather to say that the scientist who enters the Christian community will not find himself in a foreign country.

In those religions in which *primary* importance is given to teaching, presented as a direct revelation from heaven, there is less readiness to expose this teaching to the rude third degree of the

unbelievers, who then, in the name of academic freedom, demand the right to pass judgment on it *in absentia*. There is in such a case a real divorce between the scientific and the religious approach, a divorce that does not exist in the Christian tradition, which may be said, by its unwavering re-presentation of the central Event in the Mass, to have at least prepared the climate in which the scientific temperament could thrive.

That ignorance is dangerous, and that it is essential to dispel it, is a basic tenet of modern educational thought, which demands universal schooling well on into adolescence and a college degree for as many as can possibly achieve it. There is one group of enthusiasts for the cause who are apt to accuse the Church of dragging her feet, and even of opposing the spread of literacy, and certainly there has been that section of Christian opinion which has feared the effects of learning on an uneducated people lest they be "carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of man, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14). These, however, have not been the majority, and it is a matter of historical fact that again and again, and in country after country, the Christian Church has pioneered in education. One thinks, for instance, of the tremendous part played by the Church in education in medieval Europe, of the pioneer work done here as the frontier moved westwards, of the explosive missionary outreach, of the fact that to this day the vast amount of education in Africa is in the mission schools, and—perhaps most significant of all—of the insistence of the Church throughout the world upon the education of women. Because at the very center of her faith is a history to be learned, the Christian Church has been compelled to educate. But she has gone beyond the mere inculcation of the Biblical drama. She has demanded that all things be learned, and has been ready to study with sympathy even those aspects of knowledge which she had reason to feel were inimical to her. There is nothing, really nothing, in any other religious tradition comparable to the great Christian studies of Islamics, Buddhism, Hinduism, and others.

Finally, though it was essential to her message that the New Covenant was the fulfillment of the Old, and that in Christ the Law and the Prophets came to fruition, yet the early Church had to think through the whole Old Testament all over again in the light of the great new fact of Christ. It was not an easy process, and the New Testament gives much evidence of the strain it placed upon the young community. The whole Jewish attitude to the Gentiles, for example, had to be reconsidered, and woven into the fabric of all four Gospels is the claim that the Gentiles and the Jews are both a necessary part of the Church. The struggle over questions of this kind left an indelible mark on the thinking of the Christian community, and though Christians are as ready as anyone else to sit back and accept the old merely because it is old, there is that in their Creed which forbids them to treat as an entirely conclusive argument the claim that the old is better. They cannot do so, if they would still be true to him whose nature it is to make all things new.

The Christian Faith provides that position of security from which every possible illusion may be examined.

It is difficult to explain in a few words exactly why this should be so. In one sense, of course, it is true of all religions, or at any rate of all the major religions and of the most important pseudo-religions, such as Communism. All of them attempt to give a coherent explanation of the universe. They give assurance that it is not without meaning, and that one need not be terrified of examining one's own cherished assumptions because one fears that if they turn out to be illusion there would be nothing left, since behind the façade of society there would be only incoherence and chaos. Yet, obviously the most difficult thing of all to examine is the explanation itself, because if that which provides the explanation is without validity, then one is back in the same position of insecurity as before. There is always the haunting and terrifying possibility that one's religion may turn out to be mere deceit. That

this is indeed a possibility should be squarely faced by any religious person who aims to live within the academic community. To withhold anything from the debate and say that it is not a matter for discussion is for the scholar the sin against the Holy Ghost; it is intellectually dishonest.

Now, it so happens that in the long history of the Judaeo-Christian religious tradition there has been a succession of occasions on which the whole structure of the Faith has been threatened, when the community itself has had to come to terms with apparent chaos, and in order to do so it has been forced ruthlessly to examine its own assumptions and to cast out illusion. The first of these occasions was the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and the second the more complete destruction in A.D. 70. Thereafter the Jews and the Christians did not share the same crises. In Jewish history one could cite the collapse of the Baghdad Caliphate under the impact of the Turkish invasions, a collapse which meant also the destruction of Babylonian Jewry, then the leading Jewish community, and later the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, the culmination of a period of anti-Jewish savagery in Europe which has no parallel until the present day. In Christian history there was the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, and the period of the Reformation.

It would be hard to exaggerate the shattering effect of such periods as these on the religious thought of the time. Each of them posed the stark possibility that that which previously had been held to give meaning to the universe was itself without meaning. The sun seemed to have gone down at noon and primeval chaos to have returned. The answer to the question thus roughly presented was naturally not to be found in a moment, and each of these periods was a time of prolonged strain and confusion, a strain so severe that if it had been possible, the collapse of the whole community must have ensued.

A considerable literature grew up in these periods, as one might expect, but it is not uncommon for one book to stand out as

supreme: the work of the second Isaiah, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the *Civitas Dei* of Saint Augustine, the Masoretic text of the Old Testament, or the King James version of the Bible. Even when the work in question has been only the preparation of an authoritative text of the Bible or its translation into the common tongue, the purpose was not an escape from the unbearable strain of a meaningless world into the safe and manageable problems of techniques. It was always to look back again at history and ask the intolerable question, "Is there, after all, any reason to believe? Have we not been deceived these many years?"

Steadily throughout history the same answer was returned: "Yes, we have indeed been deceived and very much of what we understood to be true was mere illusion. One thing, and one thing only, has reality: the steadfast, unchanging, unalterable purpose and activity of God. 'O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces as at this day' " (Dan. 9:7). It has often been held by those who have not grasped this that the final chapters of Job represent a failure to answer the problem of meaninglessness which the book itself propounds. But this is not so. The unanswerable question of the Creator, "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?" (Job 38:4) is itself the answer: that there is no security or meaning or reality other than in God himself, and that to seek for any other is illusion.

That there is security here, in the "loving-kindness" of the Old Testament (*chesed* or steadfast love), the "faithfulness" of the Epistle to the Romans, the *sola fide* of Luther, is not itself withheld from question, and the appeal is again and again to history, to the most unalterable thing that man can perceive. It is demanded of the people that they do not close their eyes to the terror of present events, for to turn from reality is the road to final destruction. But the Exodus remains an event as certain as the Exile, and Easter as unchangeable as the Sack of Rome. *All* these events are held to be the activity of God, and because it is possible to see *all* of them as part and parcel of the same unwavering activity, and even

to foresee inevitable disaster because one knows the love of God, the basic security cannot be shaken.

So it is that the most reassuring doctrine of the Christian Faith is that of the irresistible judgment of God. Once it is grasped that everything comes under this judgment, and that by it every religion is condemned, *even the Christian religion*, then one can grasp that every apparent return of chaos is in fact the assertion of order. When Amos proclaimed in the name of God, "I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day," he was affirming that an eclipse, the clearest evidence to the Semitic mind of the ever-menacing chaos, was the manifestation of order and purpose. We should find little difficulty in believing this today, when we know the eclipses to be one of the surest methods of dating known to the historian, but we have our own apparent evidences of chaos, and our own symbols of unshakable order in which, for want of anything better, we put our trust. Therefore, every apparent evidence of security must be withdrawn, or even overthrown, and sacred and eternal cities be reduced to rubble, that illusion may be seen to be illusion, and only that which is sure remain. Temple, worship, infallible books—these may serve their purpose for a time, but they cannot be allowed to stand. When, two and a half millennia ago, Jeremiah said to the worshippers in the Temple, "Trust not in lying words" (Jer. 7:4), he challenged them to examine the illusions by which, in a time of chaos, they had contrived to live, the illusions which belonged to their religion. The grounds upon which he could dare to do so have not altered to this day.

It is customary at the present time for both Christians and non-Christians to believe that in a time of fantastic change and terrifying portents people should be encouraged to cling to their illusions, and hold for as long as possible to the consolations of religion. Hence the good press which religion receives today, the equation of religious practices with the American Way of Life, and the lamentable and unscholarly processions of books, written even by

learned and reputable men, which gloss over every difficulty and purport, for the comfort of the devout, to show that archaeology has "confirmed" the Bible. Hence also the shocking politeness of University and Church to each other, the agreement not to ask awkward questions, lest the comforting illusions of the godly be disturbed. Herod and Pilate are indeed made friends.

But this will not do. If Christians are to be true to their tradition, they must insist that all illusions be examined. The present sterilization of academic debate about both *kerygma* and *didache* is an offense to the integrity of the University and an insult to the Gospel.

This is not always well understood even in Christian circles, and it is a common failing of the godly to think that they have a duty to protect the Faith. This, however, is not their job. They may have to defend the Faith, even in certain circumstances with their lives; but if the Faith is true it does not need to be protected, and if it is not true it should not be. It is essential that the Truth be tested, and it must need be that the Christ suffer. For a Christian to forbid Christ to be crucified is to betray him, and the Gospels are full of stories which reveal the inability of the disciples to grasp this fact. In the boat on the Lake, at Caesarea Philippi, and in the Garden of Gethsemane, they imagine that their Master is endangered, and on each occasion they are rebuked.

In the academic world he places himself again at man's disposal and submits to their attacks, and in this work he must not be hindered. Men must be allowed to do their worst if they are to be saved, and the loyal but craven Christian on the campus who holds that the Faith is too sacred for enquiry destroys it more surely than the atheist who attacks it. We must not forbid God to be Christ. We must not hinder him from being seized and put on trial, from being castigated, made fun of, and nailed up on a blackboard as a public display. Only then, indeed, can we see whether he is, or is not, illusion.

The Christian Faith gives meaning to humiliation and insecurity.

One last question remains to be asked. The relevance of the Christian *kerygma* to the academic purpose and to the present academic confusion may have been established, but it cannot be denied that the outlook could still be bleak. Man is not merely frightened by meaninglessness; he is humiliated and frustrated by it. His intelligence is rebuked and he himself is reduced to insignificance.

But to substitute for a meaningless chaos the supra-meaningful Deity, far beyond all human comprehension, the "absolutely Other," dwelling in light unapproachable, does not necessarily make man's position any better. He is still humiliated, battered to the ground by the sheer, invincible rightness and authority of the Creator. He must still conform or go under, and, ashamed of his conformity, he will still shake an impotent fist at his Maker and mouth his ineffective provocations. Blind, capricious fate is frightening enough, but the all-seeing, inescapable, irresistible, omnipotent Hound of Heaven is beyond measure more terrifying still. "Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" asked the Psalmist. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the darkness shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and light are both alike to thee" (Ps. 139:7-12). One may hope by abject conformity to escape the attention of the fates; one may with superstitious awe hesitate even to mention the dreaded name, saying "Hold thy tongue; for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord" (Amos 6:10), but these are vain precautions when the "Lord" is he "unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid."⁶

⁶ Opening prayer of the Holy Communion, Book of Common Prayer.

Therefore, we need to ask again, "What hope is there? Have we been saved from chaos only to be destroyed?" It is the ancient, and oft-repeated, question of the Israelites, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us?" (Exod. 14:11) Here an important fact of Judaeo-Christian history must be noted: insecurity, humiliation, alienation, and rejection are steadily the fortune of the Chosen People. Prophet after prophet pleads with God for the merciful release of death, saying "Kill me, I pray thee, out of hand" (Num. 11:15), or "Take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers" (I Kings 19:4). The people are reduced to misery and destitution; their capital city, "the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth" (Lam. 2:15) becomes a byword to the passers-by. When God himself comes in human form, "There is no beauty that we should desire him" (Is. 53:2), nor has he anywhere to lay his head. Despised, rejected, insulted, and condemned, he achieves the salvation of the world by means of humiliation and a shameful death.

Perhaps it would be truest to say that the Christian argument is relevant because it brings the whole of human activity, including itself, under the judgment of God and maintains that there is nothing known to man which does not abide this question. This claim is at one and the same time the sternest condemnation of all that man says and does, and also the strongest argument for the essential unity of all that he does and all that he studies.

Under this judgment the packaging of knowledge is rebuked because the work of the one God is not to be dissected and divided in this fashion. Equally, all misuse of power is overruled. This is partly because power and authority belong only to God and those to whom they are entrusted must answer to him for their use of them. It is also partly because God's humility and limitation of himself in the Incarnation requires that those who exercise power do so with fear and trembling lest they act with less than the same humility. It is also because in the Incarnation the creation is seen

to be of infinite value, not indeed by its own virtue, but because it is that which the Creator would reconcile to himself. Therefore, to neglect the disciplining of oneself to comprehend from within the society over which one rules and to issue irrelevant but well-meaning decrees, is to deny the necessity for incarnation and to contradict the Creator. Thirdly, every attempt at salvation by a "clique," at giving men fellowship and community by taking them out of their society, is shown to be illusion, because God himself came *into* the World, and thereby saved the World.

The importance of the argument is not that it reveals the illusory character of so much of academic activity—of that we may become uneasily aware without ever having heard of Christ—but because it provides a coherent explanation of the illusion. The three areas which we examined in the first three chapters, the intellectual, the political, and the social, are to be measured by *one* event rather than by separate criteria, and this event is the Incarnation of God in a man, the Word become flesh, which is, as we have seen, the fulfilment of Creation and the ground of our Redemption.

By this event, if it be true, the activity of men is not only condemned; it is also redeemed. There would be no good news if the revelation of the fact of God did no more than what it must always do, judge and condemn every activity of man. But this event also sets men free to act within an illusory situation, within, that is, this structure of revolt, and by so acting to transform it. It says to those who are paralysed, who maintain that they cannot fight the system, that "your sins are forgiven you."⁷ This statement does not have, as so many imagine, primarily a moral connotation. Rather, it means that he who is forgiven is now free to act within the system, to challenge it if need be, but always from within, and not to be destroyed by it, or to be driven to escape from it.

It is important that in the Gospels every form of escape is refused. This is particularly well brought-out in the story of the Temptation (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13) where the possibilities of

⁷ Mark 2:5 It is important that this is said to be a *paralytic* patient.

satisfying men with material benefits and thus enabling them to be happy in a false situation, of replacing the Roman system by another and thus gaining all the kingdoms of the world, and of overruling this world by a dramatic and apocalyptic sign are all brought into the open and rejected. The Way of God is set forward as the way of humiliation and crucifixion, but never for one moment as the way of escape, of impotence, or of inaction.

The man who has accepted this argument, therefore, is driven back by it into the classroom, the office, or the fraternity, knowing full well that when he begins to act, the result may be that the world gangs up against him. Yet, it does not matter what happens to him, because by humiliation comes creation, and chaos is replaced by order. He is free to act because it is not he who acts. If the Christian argument is sound, God acts in men, and those men and women who have given themselves that he may act in them, can of course be killed, but they cannot be destroyed by any system.

To those who have thought this through, failure and rejection lose their terrors. Though they must admit their own utter insignificance before the glory of God, there is no longer any temptation to fling this in his teeth, for they know now that humiliation and degradation, willingly accepted, are the very essence of creation. This is the consolation of the "terrifying assertion that the same God who made the world lived in the world and passed through the grave and the gate of death. Show that to the heathen, and they may not believe it; but at least they may realize that here is something that a man might be glad to believe."⁸

⁸ Dorothy L. Sayers, *Strong Meat*, (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1939) p. 44.

Can an Academic Man Believe?

The quotation from Dorothy Sayers with which the last chapter ended poses a further question of peculiar importance to the academic world: how far is it possible for the academically trained mind to accept with integrity what he would be glad to believe? He is conditioned by his training against this very thing, and especially because the argument of the last chapter, if it should be true, would seem to offer a vision of tremendous hope to people who are humiliated and frustrated by the illusory world in which they live. The more attractive the hypothesis, however, the more it must be accepted only with caution; and so it will not do to tell him that "the Bible says so," or that "this is the teaching of the Church." This is just the kind of answer which is unacceptable to him.

A very large part of the academic life is spent in demanding, "Why do you think this? How do you know?" and if the question could not properly be asked and answered, higher education as we understand it could no longer proceed. What is required by way of an answer is some form, however vague, of factual research. In the early stages this may mean no more than, "I have got it in my notes," or "I looked it up last night," but it would be quite

intolerable if the question could not be asked at all, or if there ever arrived a point at which some one said bluntly, "You shall not ask it any more." That the textbook says so is a purely temporary answer and one which the teacher must strive to take the student beyond. He must ask what is the authority for the textbook statement, and he cannot accept the answer, so characteristic of the Muslim, "It is from God." This kind of answer reveals at once why the great Muslim universities of Spain never developed a true "science" in our sense of the word, and, if admitted in the universities of the West, would make nonsense of their whole approach.

It must therefore be recognized that students and scholars are not being merely captious and difficult when they are so hesitant about admitting the Christian argument; there are real and cogent reasons why they cannot easily do so. Not only are they trained to question *every* argument, and especially those very arguments which they might be most glad to believe, but they find themselves seriously afraid that the cure will be worse than the disease, and that though the operation may be successful, the patient will be dead. This is not only the normal alarm of fallen man when his autonomy is threatened, though naturally this may be included, but a more reasonable and intelligent fear that the whole academic way of life is likely to be overthrown. He may be prepared to admit, in view of the evidence presented in the last chapter, that the Christian argument is relevant, but often he cannot but feel that this argument necessarily introduces in its support such an absolute and unquestionable authority that limits will be set to the kind of question which he is duty bound to ask.

In recognizing that the Christian argument necessitates such an authority the non-Christian scholar is undoubtedly right, for it must never be forgotten that though men may argue about the absolute authority of the Bible or of the Church, there can be for the Christian no argument at all about the absolute authority of the Creator. Because of the extreme position on the subject of

Biblical authority taken by many Fundamentalists, this fact has often become obscured, and people have slipped into thinking that because they no longer have to accept the authority of the Bible in every discipline, therefore, they no longer have to accept the authority of God. But the kind of God of whom the Christian speaks *must* have absolute authority. There is no other possibility.

The fact of the *divine* authority is in no sense affected by the discussions concerning *Biblical* authority, because the whole point of the criticism made of the extreme Fundamentalist position by their Christian brethren was that the Fundamentalists were in danger of idolizing the creature in place of the Creator, and according to the Bible an authority which could belong only to God himself. There cannot be for the Christian any suggestion that the omnipotence and omniscience of God is impugned when it is said that the Bible is not accurate in every detail. Yet far too often today the attitude of the common man to God is that this is the conclusion he was supposed to draw, and even those who cannot accept the Fundamentalist position should recognize that the very error of whose danger the Fundamentalists were aware has been very widely accepted. Yet, it is no less an error. God remains what he has always been, almighty, absolute, righteous, and holy—the Creator, in fact. To believe in his name, to accept him for what he is, means to accept this authority, to surrender oneself to him, body, mind and soul.

Valid Fears of the Academic Man Concerning the Christian Faith

In face of this demand the academic world is very nervous, and in part its fears are entirely valid, but in part they are not, since they spring from that kind of weakness to which the academic mind is particularly prone. The valid fears may be said to be three.

The first is a fear of any outside authority as threatening aca-

democratic freedom. This is an ever-present danger in the university world and one which goes to the very roots of its existence, for if a university or college is not to be free to say what it likes, think what it likes, and publish what it likes, then it will wither and decay upon its feet. What it almost most of all dreads is *directed* research because it knows that this is not real research at all, and that truth is only too likely to be crowded out in the end if the real purpose of research is not truth itself. It is not without justification for these fears, for it has seen the prostitution of learning which took place in Nazi Germany, it has heard fearful rumors of the situation in universities behind the iron curtain, and it has itself felt and feared the impact of McCarthyism. It is for this reason that both faculty and students resent the imposition of loyalty oaths.

Unfortunately, they suspect the Christian Church possibly more than any other single group in this matter, and there is reason for them to do so. It is not only that they remember Galileo and Darwin and Huxley and Bishop Wilberforce, but they look across the Atlantic to the Church in Spain today and find it hard not to believe that it is "identifying injustice and stupidity with Faith in Christ and in his Church, and abandoning an uninhabitable world in which they feel there is nothing to be done."¹ They remember also the famous "monkey trial" which took place within the lifetime of the majority of present faculty members, and they know that there are still those church-related colleges where the authority of the Church remains an obstacle to sound learning. I have myself, no more than two years ago, heard the president of an important and respected church college say to a group of students whom he was welcoming to the campus, "You will hear elsewhere men say that man is descended from an amoeba, but you will not hear that here!" The university world has moments when it turns to the spokesmen of the Christian Church and says,

¹ This caustic description, it should be pointed out, was made by a group of *Spanish Catholics*. It is quoted by Samuel J. Wylie in *New Patterns for Christian Action* (Seabury Press, Greenwich, 1959), p. 28.

"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" and one cannot find it in one's heart to blame them.

The second fear is that if a man does surrender himself, body, mind and soul to anyone, even to God, his reason will be destroyed. It is feared that he will develop mental blind spots, or even that they may be demanded of him, and that he will be so swayed by this new allegiance that he will tend to think with his emotions rather than with his mind. This fear is clearly allied to the first, but where the first danger was of the destruction of academic freedom from without, this is rather that the faculty themselves will become corrupted, and that what will be destroyed will be not only academic freedom but also scientific integrity, the objectivity which is held to be essential to true enquiry and sound instruction.

It is not possible entirely to distinguish these two fears and they are both comprehended in Ibn Khaldun's description (and, it should be noted, commendation) of Muhammed, "whose wisdom as a legislator and whose miraculous power (*i'jaz*) as a prophet were most clearly demonstrated by his ability to use the easiest and most efficient ways to convince his followers of the truth of his message and the necessity of following it. He started by performing miracles through the succession of which 'the mood of obedience and submission' was created in his followers, for 'they were dumbfounded and surprised.' Then he instructed them in what is good for them in this world and in the world to come, enticing them by the promise of rewards (*targhīb*), and frightening them by threats (*tarhīb*) if they did not obey him. Through such methods, he succeeded in creating in them the attitude of dogmatic belief."²

What the academic world dreads is exactly this "attitude of dogmatic belief," and there is obviously much reason behind their fear. A convinced and committed believer, whatever his religion, is in serious danger of not thinking straight about the things which

² Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History* (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1957) p. 80-81.

seem to him to touch that religion. Hilaire Belloc used to speak of the problem for a Catholic historian in Britain of writing objectively about the period of the Reformation, and one may think also of the inability of the committed Mormon to examine objectively the story of the golden plates, or, in the secular sphere, of the failure of the devoted patriot to see the weaknesses in his own country's policy. In some ways this is not entirely a bad thing, for from this sense of committal grow the virtues of loyalty and courage. Every religion and every cause needs its zealots, but they are anathema to the University.

There is perhaps an added danger that the committed Christian may thus offend the academic canons of what is proper, for he has committed himself not to a cause but to a *Person*, and to a Person, moreover, whom he believes to have given his life for men. It has sometimes been allowed to the adherents of other religions to conceal their faith in a time of persecution, but this has never been permitted to those within the fellowship of Christ's religion. In this community it has been held that even the weakest neophyte must go to the stake, if need be, for his Savior. To do otherwise would be the blackest and most humiliating treachery. Clearly those who hold such a Faith can never compromise, and consequently stand in special danger, by reason of the very depth and intensity of their loyalty, of being unable to see all that is involved in the arguments of others.

The third fear is that if people so commit themselves to causes and to faiths, such tensions will develop between them that education will become impossible. There is, of course, a tension which is profitable to the university and college scene, that vigorous give and take of intellectual argument which has been called the "clash of mind upon mind." In fact, it is held by many that this *is* education and that the instruction of the classroom and the private study in the library are valueless if the minds of the students are not being stimulated, stretched, and tested by argument. And by "argument" here they do not mean the superficial bull-session which

so often passes for discussion in student circles (though, to be sure, this has its place in the total process), but the strong encounter of the instructed, where everyone hits hard because he is convinced that he has reason on his side, and no quarter is given.

However, this tension, which is intellectual, and therefore entirely proper to the campus, can too easily be transformed into a cold war by the introduction of passions from without. In Palestine, for instance, during the days of the British Mandate, the schools of the Mission in which I taught were almost alone in the country in having Arabs and Jews together in the same classroom. We were very proud of this achievement, and there is no doubt that it was a real contribution to a terribly bitter situation. However, it was an achievement made possible only by the firm decision to keep the tensions of the country as far as possible outside the four walls of the school. Some, for example, forbade the introduction of Arabic and Hebrew newspapers into the school; none dared institute a course in the history of Palestine since 1918. This was possible because all the groups involved, Arabs, Jews and British, agreed tacitly not to raise the disturbing questions. In no sense did it mean that we exorcised the tensions. Some few boys became converted to a broader and more tolerant outlook, and in the time of the fighting displayed no little courage in upholding this, but they were very few. I have discovered since, for instance, that almost every Jewish boy in our school in Haifa was a member of one of the then illegal anti-British military groups. We did not know this at the time, of course, and they themselves were extremely faithful in not rousing any kind of trouble in the school itself.

This experience lasted one way and another over many years, and it has convinced me that an absence of strong emotional tension is essential to true education. Where an institution managed to remove the tension, either by educating only one group, or because all concerned agreed to leave the emotionally disturbing elements outside, the education still remained defective. A great many things

which ought to have been taught were not taught, because to introduce them would have been to break the rules.

Now, this experience is very relevant to the American scene, for here the latent possibilities of such a situation often exist. The still insufficiently integrated immigrant population means the existence in many districts of potentially antagonistic groups, a fact which is too often forgotten by those European critics who are irritated by the apparent American readiness to discuss only those matters about which they are agreed. Obviously, at present the greatest problem seems to be in the South, and it is important to remember that the trend towards integration which is now taking place would not have been even remotely possible if the calming process had not already proceeded a long way outside the schools. We have had too many examples of the harm that can be done by even a few rebellious spirits in a school that is attempting integration to have much doubt of that.

Religious passions are no less disturbing and in the person of the Christian the academic world is only too likely to find itself confronted with one of the types that it most dislikes, the missionary. This, again, is more of a problem in America than it is in Europe, where the Christian Church has reached a certain equilibrium—some would call it the sleep of death—and where the questions of religious education, which in the past aroused the greatest fervor, have now but little power to excite. In the United States, however, this is not so. The "separation of Church and State" is a phrase which can immediately rouse the public, and the revivalist is still an authentic feature of the American religious landscape. The strong emotionalism of the "sects" is also an American, but not a European, phenomenon. Therefore, the American university has more reason than its European counterpart to fear religious tension and the harm that can be done to the ordered processes of education by a handful of enthusiasts who have given their lives to Christ. The faculty of one Ohio university still mention with disapproval the emotional disturbance that was created

in even a few days by a small Christian missionary group who briefly visited the campus some little time ago.

These are all reasonably valid fears, and in institutions where so much of the effort is devoted to instruction, they are possibly even more valid than in those which exist only for the elite "in search for truth." The latter may be expected to have developed a certain mental toughness and so be able to withstand the strain. The huge body of undergraduates, whom the authorities believe to be still in need of instruction, may for that reason be less protected.

The Invalid Fears Concerning the Faith

Nevertheless, some of the scholar's fears are due rather to those weaknesses to which the academic mind is particularly tempted. The first of these is a nervousness about decision, about committing oneself to a theory. It is so drummed into the thinking of the scholar in his student days that he must be objective, that he must be ready to see truth everywhere, that he is often very hesitant about coming down on either side of the fence. A great many faculty members are therefore slightly apprehensive about decision in general, and prefer to leave this unpleasant activity to the administration, who, they are inclined to believe, are paid to do this for them. Since it is undeniable that the Christian Faith requires decision, and that no one ever became a Christian merely by birth or by accident, it is not surprising that the academic mind is inclined to shy off from something so demanding.

The second weakness is a fear of the hurly-burly, a tendency to withdraw from the world. This again should cause no surprise, since studying of any kind can almost always be better done in an atmosphere of quiet. However, it is a weakness. It has proceeded much further in Europe, where the remote and fastidious intellectual, out of touch with the world in which he lives, is a recognizable type, than here, where the still youthful country's distrust

of the "egg-head" gives him less opportunity to develop. Yet he exists in embryo, being already more "respectable" than he used to be only a few years ago, and the United States needs to take warning from the inability of the European universities to hinder the development of the Fascist tyranny in the years before the war. If, moreover, one accepts the Christian belief that God is directly active in this world's affairs, and that the Incarnation is the supreme example of this, then the inability to become involved in the ordinary turmoil of the world is not only a weakness but a sin.

The third weakness is the scholar's fear for his own position, the dread that if he does commit himself publicly to the Christian, or to any other, Faith, his scholarship will be called in question. It is possible that this fear is stronger among graduate students than among other groups, and it may be one of the reasons why the Church foundations find such difficulty in working at this level. For him who seeks advancement in the academic world a reputation for scholarship is an entirely vital, and yet a precarious, possession, all the more precarious because in a country of this size the quality of a person's scholarship is difficult to assess. In this welter of huge universities, multitudinous colleges, and gigantic distances, the would-be scholar is in real danger of remaining completely unknown unless he can produce the concrete evidence of learning which is necessary to impress the world outside. It is of little use his devoting a lifetime to scholarly research before he ventures to publish his opinions. He needs to be able tactfully to mention his Ph.D. and his various learned articles and other publications, so that these evident facts may speak for him to those who cannot, because they live three thousand miles away, know him as a person. When he has reached the happy position of being mentioned on appointment committees as "Dr. So-and-so—you know, he's written quite a number of articles on the subject," this whole structure upon which, despite himself, he is forced to rely, may be quite seriously undermined, if the answer is, "Oh yes, but he's not what he was. He's getting interested in religion."

Of course, those who know him personally may be well aware that his scholarship has not suffered one whit because of his convictions, but they form only a small part of any scholar's world. Those who do not know him have heard of too many other people whose scholarship has declined not to have their doubts.

Now, the kind of fears that have been discussed so far, or at any rate those of them which can properly be called valid, have been fears that whole complicated process which makes up the university system would be prevented from operating as the result of the pressure of authority from outside. There is the fear that this authority may intervene to limit either research or instruction, and thereby forcibly prevent the University from doing its true job at either the graduate or undergraduate level. There is the fear that it may so discipline the minds of the members of the institution that they may become incapable of doing their proper work, that of teaching or of learning objectively. And thirdly, there is the fear that authority may so command the actions of the students or faculty that education would be unable to proceed. In other words, they fear that if they admit the existence of an exterior authority, they will then be prevented from performing their true function by one of the following: direct veto, incapacity of their own members, or an atmosphere so charged with emotion that the processes will become clogged. There is, however, another fear, which is not that the university or college will be prevented from doing its true job, but that the job itself will be shown to be basically unsound. This fear centers round the problem of miracle and revelation.

The Problem of Revelation

It has already been seen that Muslims in the tradition of Ibn Khaldun both believe Muhammed to have compelled men by the performance of miracles, and commend him for having done so. That this kind of persuasion may be used on the campus we have also seen to be one part of the academic hesitation about the Chris-

tian Faith. However, deeper than this goes the fear of the whole category of miracle and revelation, and especially of its use as an intellectual argument. To admit the mere possibility is disturbing to the scientific temper of today. Modern college and university education is based, to an extent which is very difficult to exaggerate, on what many are pleased to call the scientific method, isolation of the thing studied, dissection and analysis, controlled experiment and observation, compilation of statistics, and finally synthesis and the establishment of "laws." Clearly, this method cannot be applied to anything like the same extent in the humanities and the arts as it is in the pure sciences, but it is practiced even there, and it seems to be felt in some quarters that it is not until one has isolated, analyzed, classified, and systematized a subject that it can be taught wholesale. From how many Ph.D. dissertations, one wonders, would we mercifully have been delivered if statistical research had been forbidden in all subjects but those to which it really applies? ³

It is not, however, the extent of this approach with which we are concerned here, but with the fact of it, with the present, extraordinarily pervading, quasi-scientific atmosphere on the campus, with the exaltation in so many undergraduate minds of "science" above the humanities, a tendency which has clearly been increased since Sputnik. So compelling is this atmosphere that lecturers to freshmen in almost any subject have been known to assure them that what they are about to study is really a "science." To a generation which has grown up and lived its life in this quasi-scientific climate, even though it may be condemned by the true scientist, the thought of miracle is singularly unnerving. The twentieth-

³ The comment of a faculty member who criticized the first draft of the manuscript seems germane at this point: "That this "scientism" has also been carried to absurd lengths in many public high schools is clear. In a study that I am making of trends in teaching of English literature in the senior high schools during the last half-century, I am continually impressed by the unfortunate effects of the fetish of scientific problem solving upon both curriculum and method."

century humanist who believes in "a naturalistic cosmology or metaphysics or attitude toward the universe as a totality of being and as a constantly changing system of events which exist independently of any mind or consciousness,"⁴ can hardly avoid, therefore, finding it difficult to come to terms with the New Testament, where even the most extreme efforts of the liberal school did not succeed in disentangling the *kerygma* from the miraculous. The miracle stories are so inextricably mixed up with the Gospel that they must be said to be a part of it.

Moreover, to any person with a scientific training, as Dr. Pollard has shown,⁵ the existence of an active God is a problem. It is, of course, essential, to any form of scientific enquiry that as far as possible the experiment must be controlled, and that outside influences must be brought under this control or must be excluded altogether. The more a man continues his researches, the more he narrows down his field of enquiry, the more certain he must try to be that this is so, and he can continue his work only on the assumption that God is not the kind of Person who does intervene, because should he do so, he could clearly be neither controlled nor excluded. The Christian argument of a God who is continually concerned about, and active in, this world's affairs must make the scientist nervous, because it seems to him to mean that his work is at the mercy of what, from his point of view, must appear to be an uncontrollable and unpredictable force. Consequently, he tends to reject the whole idea of miracle, sometimes almost violently, as "unscientific," and would greatly prefer a God of the remote, Deistic sort.

The Christian Church thus finds herself confronted in the university with a group of people whose whole life and environment cause them to resist exterior authority, and to distrust profoundly all that comes from outside, all, that is, that they cannot bring

⁴ Corliss Lamont, *Humanism as a Philosophy* (Philosophical Library, N. Y., 1949), p. 19.

⁵ William G. Pollard, *Chance and Providence* (Scribner, N. Y. 1958), p. 7.

under control, all that they cannot isolate, scrutinize, and examine. Such men are by nature conditioned to look askance at all forms of exterior revelation and miracle. Naturally, the academic world has its normal complement of the blind and the prejudiced, but those outside, who do not share the academic training, should beware of ascribing all academic opposition to the Christian Faith to willful obstinacy. It is not that scholars are being foolish and conceited, or at least not more so than any group of men, but that the integrity of their craft requires them to take this attitude.

However, the Christian Church is committed to what, on the surface at least, must appear to many to be the very opposite. Christians believe sincerely and wholeheartedly, and know that they have good reason to believe, in a Power who is absolute and authoritative, the Master of the universe, who always maintains the initiative, is continually active, brooks no questions, and will not be the object of an experiment. Of those who test him, prove him, and see his works, God says, "It is a people that do err in their hearts, and they have not known my ways," (Ps. 95:10). Further, Christians know their knowledge to have come to them by no virtue or activity of their own, but by the revelation of God, and at the very center of their Creed is the flat statement that on a certain day and in a certain place in history what we may call the normal processes of history were apparently overruled and a man rose from the dead.

It is even more complicated than this. We cannot, as so many try to do, divide "religion" and "science," allowing both the Church and the University autonomy in its own sphere. Knowledge, even to the most "objective" scientists, does not come steadily on by research alone. It comes, again and again, by flashes of inspiration, by what many would call revelation. Naturally, these brilliant insights must be tested and examined by all the proper scientific process before they can be published to the world, but there they are, startling interruptions of the orderly progress of trained and disciplined thought.

One might go further and point out that there is always one factor in an experiment which cannot be completely controlled, and that is man himself. The result is that no experiment is ever, strictly speaking, "repeated." Yet it is just here, in the secret places of the mind, that Christians believe that God works most directly, as the cleansing power of the Spirit purges and directs the innermost counsels of the heart.

On the other hand, there are essential parts of the Christian Faith which do not concern what most people would call the spiritual. Inextricably mixed with the most exalted Christian utterances are the earthy facts of Middle Eastern history, and at the very basis of the doctrine of the Redemption lie statements about the nature and character of the human animal. The Christian Church, therefore, cannot stand aloof from the whole process of scientific enquiry and instruction. She cannot throw away the things of this world and leave that part of knowledge to the secular university.

Yet, where is the line to be drawn? Where are the limits of the authority of the University, and where does the authority of the Church begin? What are we to learn by research, and what by revelation? And how do the University and the Christian Church talk to each other when they meet?

The Intellectual Encounter

The problem posed by miracle and revelation is by no means as modern as many are inclined to believe. Even in the twelfth century, two hundred years before the time of Ibn Khaldun, the great Jewish scholar, Maimonides, had set forward a very different view of the place of miracles in the teaching of a prophet: "Moses our teacher was not believed in by the Israelites because of the miracles he wrought. One whose belief depends on miracles is of imperfect faith, since miracles can be wrought by magic and by sleight of hand."¹ In the *Guide to the Perplexed* he maintained that "God could have changed the character of the Israelites by miracles, but that is not his way; if it had been, there would have been no point in human struggle and the law would have been superfluous (xxxii, 325). Here, as always, God works *through* nature."²

If one asks why these two intellectual giants, raised in such similar monotheistic religions, belonging to the same cultural environment even though separated by two hundred years, should have adopted such diametrically opposite views, the answer must be that here we have all the difference between the faith which prepared for, and the faith which rejected, the Incarnation. This is

¹ Foundations, viii, 1, quoted by Leon Roth in *The Guide for the Perplexed: Moses Maimonides* (Hutchinson's University Library, London, 1948), p. 64.

² *Ibid.*, p. 78.

the crux of the intellectual encounter between Church and University. "God was in Christ," said Saint Paul, "reconciling the world to himself" (II Cor. 5:19), and the significance of this statement for the academic world needs very serious consideration.

If one rejects the Incarnation, one is then faced with a difficult problem of authority for moral and ethical laws. It is possible, of course, to go further and reject any external authority altogether, but then one seems to be driven into arguing that no one ethical system is better than another, and that there is no ultimate reason why a man *ought* to do anything. This relativist position leads finally to moral anarchy, as can only too clearly be seen on this continent at the present time. As the alternative to anarchy one must invoke authority, but authority, thus invoked, cannot, if it is to have power over men, be also under their control and limited by *their* authority. Yet, if it is not, it only too easily becomes tyranny. The authority, it is true, does not need to be a divine authority. One may, if it is so desired, postulate some authority within this world of time and space, the American Way of Life, or Communism, or the Arab Nation, but such an authority is attended no less by the dangers of absolutism, of fiat supported by miracle and revelation, and the evidence of the present age seems to be that the "attitude of dogmatic belief" cannot be avoided.

One may, on the other hand, accept the Incarnation, or for the moment, perhaps, only the incarnational concept, the idea that the nature of God is to limit his own authority and to work steadily through his own creation. By this concept every terror is removed. We have already seen that it gives at least an intelligible and reasonable basis for the work of scientific research, and the necessary assurance that, however extended, this can never, if faithfully performed, be irrelevant, meaningless, or maleficent. It also provides an authority so unquestionably absolute that there can be no ultimate anarchy or finally effective rebellion. Yet this authority is so limited and restrained that it cannot be arbitrary or tyrannical, or even by irrational miracle compel "dogmatic belief."

The importance of this last statement for the academic world can hardly be exaggerated. It is therefore necessary to emphasize the very strong support which it receives from both the Old and New Testaments. It is customary among those who do not know their Bibles very well to imagine that miracle stories are scattered throughout the Bible more or less indiscriminately, and that acceptance of the Biblical argument is in some way dependent upon them. This is not so. They are most emphatically *not* used as an argument for belief, but occur in three periods only, as strange (and, it must be admitted, to the modern scientific temper uncomfortable) accompaniments of certain periods of power: the Exodus, the time of Elijah and Elisha, and the period of Christ's ministry. Perhaps the most striking of all is their absence from the prophetic books.³ Maimonides' description⁴ of the Prophets as "scientists" has seemed, both to his contemporaries and to many since, to be grotesque. Yet, by such a description he made clear that "Thus saith the Lord!" can never be an arbitrary and exotic command, but must always be tested against the events of earthly history to see whether it is reasonably in accord with them.

All four Gospels confirm this. They leave the reader in no doubt that the temptation to use miraculous power to compel belief was real and persistent, and that it was as persistently resisted. "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign," said Christ, "and there shall be no sign be given unto it" (Matt. 16:4). Where men did not already accept him, he could do no mighty works because of their unbelief (Mark 6:5), for belief must never be procured by acts of power. "Except ye see signs and wonders," he is reported to have said in rebuke upon another occasion, "ye will not believe" (John 4:48). Even from the Cross he made no answer to those who summoned him to descend that they might be convinced,

³ Admittedly they occur in the book of Daniel, but this is not a prophetic book in the ordinary sense, and even there they are homiletic stories for believers enduring great persecution. They are not intended to convert the non-believer.

⁴ Leon Roth, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

and all the Resurrection stories are of appearances to those who already believed. For God to have become Man was to have accepted every implication of this act, and therefore the reasoning of Caiaphas and those who thought like him was never to be overruled by a miraculous display. The *Deus in corpore humano* cannot also be a *deus ex machina*.

The Christian Failure in the Intellectual Sphere

The Incarnation, however, cannot for the Christian ever be a mere concept; it is an event, an unalterable happening in history which cannot now be changed, however much it may be necessary to think and rethink the implications of it. If therefore we are to accept it as an event, and to make our own the blunt statement of Saint John, *Verbum caro factum est*, it follows that what we are saying is that both University and Church must also accept every implication of this act. This, however, they have manifestly not done, and indeed, it is hard to speak in moderate terms of what the Christian failure to think this out in the intellectual sphere has meant. Some few brief indications must be sufficient.

First, a very large part of the Christian Church in the West has reverted to moral instruction by means of irrelevant fiat, undergirded by miracle, the miracle in this case being usually an infallible Bible, or sometimes a sinless Church. The argument for good behavior then is, "The Bible says so," or "This is the teaching of the Church." We have already seen that such an argument as it stands is inadmissible to the academic mind, and rightly so. If the authority of the Bible is based upon its supposed divinely preserved infallibility rather than upon the events with which it is concerned, then it can have for the Christian no authority. He must not, if he is to be faithful to his Master, use the Bible to compel belief. Nor may he use the Church. "The teaching of the Church is . . ." remains a legitimate statement when it is purely factual, and describes the beliefs of the Christian community. It is not, however, legiti-

mate, when it is a statement endowed with the authority of revelation, which may not then be called in question. The Body of Christ may no more be used to overwhelm the doubter now than it could so be used in the forty days after Easter.

The confusion of thought upon this matter is at least as great in the minds of those who have a good Christian upbringing as with those who have not. It is believed by a surprising number of undergraduates that it is in some way "good" to read the Bible, as if the Bible was endowed with moral authority in its own right; few of them can think of no other way in which one may regard the Bible as "true," if it is not literally true; very many are still troubled by questions of whether the world was created in six days or whether Jonah was swallowed by a whale. They are given well-nigh no assistance by the clergy, ninety per cent of whose sermons are the imparting of moral instruction unrelated to a sound theology.

This false approach has recently received ponderous support from the Interpreter's Bible, where the commentary on every book has been divided into "exegesis" and "exposition," written by two separate people, apparently without there being always close consultation between them. The exegesis is often sound scholarship, sometimes even admirable, but the exposition throughout is the drawing of moral lessons, frequently unrelated to the events of history on which the Biblical argument is based.⁵ This is also, only too often, the approach of the seminaries, where the teaching of the Old Testament is done by one man, the teaching of the New Testament by another, and sermon production is taught by a third. These men are usually scholars who take their duties very seriously, and they are fully entitled to respect. However, because of this divorce in Biblical studies the moral teaching of the Church has hardened into moralism, unrelated to a full understanding of the material from which the moral code is drawn. Far more than any-

⁵ It is necessary, however, to except from these strictures at least one expository section, the Exposition on *Jeremiah* by Stanley Romaine Hopper in *Interpreter's Bible*, Vol. 5, pp. 794-1142 (Abingdon 1956). This is admirable.

thing else, this is the reason why generation after generation of students today tends either to resent, or even to reject, the teaching of the Christian Church.

This same tendency is, as one might expect, very much more apparent in Sunday School material, where there is often a serious failure to present the history as history requiring to be learned, and where, with a frequency that is alarming, the child is encouraged to believe that in any apparent dispute between "science" and "religion," the scientific argument may easily be seen to be defective. I have yet to read, even in material prepared for senior classes, any discussion of such problems, of the thorny question of miracles for instance, which deals with the subject with either courage or real honesty.

From the academic side it is interesting to find how many writers spend their time proving to the reader the essential agreement between "science" and the Bible. Mention has already been made of the books on archaeology which concentrate upon the confirmatory evidence and play down that which conflicts with the Biblical story, and the curious, but manifestly false, argument that the Biblical account of creation agrees in order with the geologist's picture of the development of the world appears in books by quite eminent authors. Certainly, we were due for a reaction from the books of a previous generation, which suggested that the Biblical account was almost completely untrustworthy, but there is a lack of balance about the reaction which is disturbing. It looks uncomfortably as if the authors are unanxious at this time, when it is politically and socially desirable to support religion, to disturb the faith of those who find it a comfort to them. However, it may be that the writers themselves really do think that it would be better if the Bible could be shown to be "true."

Whatever the reason the net result is that the suggestion is left in the reader's mind that revelation is a valid method in itself of acquiring scientific knowledge, which does not then need to have such brutal scrutiny as is given to other theories, and that though

perhaps we cannot now believe everything that the Bible says, we have a moral obligation as Christians to believe as much as we can. We need to consider carefully where this argument is leading us. Consider by the way of example the first chapter of Genesis. If we believe that it is important to save the writer's face by pointing out the relative correctness of his account, *considered not as a theological argument, but as a scientific statement*, we must go on to answer the question of how he came to be right to this extent. Was it by research, by accident, or by revelation from without? If the answer is that he was right by accident, then the fact that he was right has no significance. To say that he conducted scientific research in our terms is obvious nonsense. We are then left with the answer that this knowledge was revealed to him, but if men can indeed acquire scientific knowledge by this means, we are faced with some very serious questions about the whole scientific method.

Seeking After a Sign

Moreover, this argument denies the Incarnation, for it argues that Revelation is made without blood and sweat, that the prophet can know the truth without enduring the torment of an Assyrian invasion, that it is sufficient, as the Docetists claimed, for Christ to have a heavenly body without submitting to the strait jacket of an earthly one, and that the discipline of study is unnecessary to those who would know the facts of God's universe. It is the error which is behind the whole problem of "Darwinism" and the apparent threat of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which seem to many to have challenged the uniqueness of the Christian Church and the Sacraments. A wicked and adulterous generation continues to demand a sign; some clear proof, evident beyond question even to the agnostic, that the Christian Faith is both unique and true. If we could seriously maintain that the Bible was literally true, if we could force the scientists to admit that there was some point of special creation, if we could insist on the complete newness of the Communion service

as Christ ordained it, then men think we should have an indestructible rock which no enemy could overthrow.

What they are asking for is a miracle, some definite point of intervention at which God pierced the fabric of history and said, "Let there be life!" or possibly endowed man with his peculiar qualities, or dictated the Bible, or ordained the Eucharist as an entirely new thing. It is akin to the thinking which makes men long for some dramatic reversal of history, for the overthrow of Communism or the end of the Middle Eastern crisis, or believe that if only we do the "right" thing, such as abolishing nuclear weapons, God will then suddenly give us peace.

The ordinary Christian of today, therefore, feels threatened when he is told that there is no clear intervention at any point whatever. The intolerably slow development of creation over millions of years, life emerging imperceptibly through the unfilterable viruses, proto-human beings, the Bible's debt to frankly pagan documents, the Essenes' sacramental meals, all these puzzle and disturb him. He is troubled when he is told that exhaustive excavations at Jericho have revealed no trace of a city there in Joshua's time, and shocked at the thought of God using the blood-thirsty techniques that were commonplace in the time of Saul. The creeping menace of Communism appears to him something which ought to be overthrown by divine action, and he cannot come to terms with it as something through which God works. He does not know what to make of the universe which science and history have revealed; and it must be admitted that very little of the teaching in either Church or University have done much to help him with his problem. Hence the pathetic popularity on the campus of superficial paperbacks on the Dead Sea Scrolls or Zen Buddhism.

Insufficient thought has been given by the Christian Church in recent years to the relation of Incarnation and Sacrament to Creation, to the manner in which God enters into the ordinary physical things of this world and through them acts with power, while at no time disrupting the normal physical character of what he uses.

Christ, the Christian has always believed, is really and truly Man, subject to all normal physical weaknesses of hunger and thirst, and this is in no way altered by the fact that he is also really and truly God. The Chaldeans remain a "bitter and hasty nation," though they are a tool in the hand of the Almighty.

When God wishes to make his will known to men there is no sudden intervention of the kind that Christians on the campus seem to long for. Instead, "a young woman shall conceive and bear a son" (Isa. 7:14), who may grow up to be the terrible King of Assyria, or Herod, or Pilate, or John the Baptist, or Saint Paul. Yet nowhere is the slenderest thread of history broken, as the almighty Creator reveals himself to men.

If we do not give serious thought to this matter, we shall succumb to being shaken by every new discovery. Thus, faced with the new sciences of psychiatry and sociology, Christians tend either to recoil from them in horror, or else to accept them with the joy of those who have at last heard the Gospel. Since they long so desperately for a sign, they are apt to believe that the sociological concepts of "rejection" and "acceptance" are a God-given proof of what they have been saying all the time about sin and redemption, that the Toynbee of the first part of *A Study of History* is a Christian prophet, and that the theories of the Cambridge physicists about "continuous creation" put God back into the scientific picture. They are therefore hurt and angry when Toynbee publishes Volumes VII-X in which he rejects the Resurrection, and when Professor Hoyle says bluntly and firmly that he is not a Christian.

We need to realize that if God had miraculously preserved the Scriptures from error, or had suddenly intervened in history to create that entirely new thing, an amoeba, or had ordained a Sacrament which owed nothing to pre-Christian ideas, he would have shown himself to be markedly different from the God who chose to be born quietly at Bethlehem, the helpless son of Mary, herself the daughter of an ordinary father and mother, part of the unbroken fabric of human history. All the discoveries, therefore,

which seem to the uninstructed to push God further and further away from his universe, are rather the evidence that he is wholeheartedly active in it. They are of a piece with the Incarnation and the Sacraments. This is not to say, of course, that they are the same, for the Incarnation is unique and unrepeatable. Yet they show that God does not at any time act contrary to his own nature, and that his whole activity has but one end, which in the Incarnation we see made plain: the reconciliation of what he has made to himself.

To say that it is along these lines that we should be thinking does not, however, mean that henceforth there will be no conflict. Not all men on the campus accept the Incarnation, nor can it ever be made a condition of their employment that they shall. Excellence in scholarship does not necessarily depend upon a profound understanding of the Christian Faith, and there are sure to be many whose competence in their own field is unquestioned, and who yet reject the Christian argument. It is the meeting of Christian scholars with men and women such as these that provides the encounter with which this chapter is concerned. The nature of this encounter may perhaps be seen to best advantage if we pursue the question of history, for though the Bible makes no claim to offer a scientific explanation of the universe, it does claim to be a history book. In this field it is so worthy of respect that historians are bound to use it as one of their sources, and in fact as the main literary source, for one, admittedly small, part of their studies. The meeting of the Christian and the secular historian may therefore provide something of a laboratory study for the other meetings.

Biblical and Secular History

The nature of Biblical history is very curious. Every now and again it provides us with what might be called "real" history, or at any rate the material with which real history is made. The records of the reign of David, the book of Nehemiah, the book of the Acts, are excellent instances of this. Nevertheless, even these are worked-

over history. They give us historical facts as seen, selected, and interpreted by people whose strong convictions about these events have been obtained from extra-historical sources. Other parts of the Bible exhibit this characteristic even more strongly. It is therefore normal for historians to conduct their own process of selection, and to attempt to disentangle the events from the interpretation, then recounting the events without reference to the interpretation. It is notable that accounts of the history of Israel, even those used as textbooks in seminaries, though inevitably using the Old Testament as a primary source, often do not seriously discuss the Biblical interpretation of that history.

A second curious fact about the Bible as history is that the events upon which the greatest amount of Biblical thinking is built, the very things which it seems most desirable to establish as historical fact, are often those which it is most difficult to establish. Outstanding among these are the events of the Exodus and the events of Christ's life. These are fundamental to the whole Christian message. If there is not a solid, indestructible core of historical truth in these stories, the Christian Gospel as we know it collapses.

Yet, when we examine the matter we find that there is an almost complete absence of external confirmatory evidence for the Exodus. The sojourn in Egypt is nowhere mentioned in Egyptian records; there is even evidence that some of the tribes never went there. The route of the Exodus is notoriously difficult to determine; where Sinai was is still a matter of dispute; at no point along the Exodus route has any vestige of direct confirmation been obtained. Indeed, the most fully excavated site, that of Jericho, whose capture was held to be an event of considerable importance to the story, has revealed so little material of the Joshua period that, if it were not for the Biblical account, the most satisfactory explanation would be that it was uninhabited at the time. After the entry into Canaan the position is different, and the archaeological evidence is considerable, but at no point in the whole crucial period from the time that Joseph is reported to have been sold into slavery to the time

Joshua is reputed to have captured Jericho can we lay our finger upon some piece of independent evidence and say, "There! That confirms the existence of the Jews in Egypt or their passage across the desert."

We find ourselves in the same curious position with the New Testament. There is no direct, exterior confirmatory evidence of any kind to the truth of the Gospel story, nor contemporary mention of Jesus, only the most fragmentary remains of buildings which we can say existed in the Palestine of his time. So difficult is it to establish with certainty the truth of any particular story that one devout, and even saintly, scholar found himself forced to say that of the Gospels, "It seems, then, that the form of the earthly, no less than the heavenly Christ is for the most part hidden from us. For all the inestimable value of the Gospels, they yield us little more than a whisper of his voice; we trace in them but the outskirts of his ways."⁶

Moreover, in the Gospels we are faced with the most perplexing kind of history. It really does not matter what method of serious historical research a man adopts, whether he concentrates on disentangling the documents, or whether he tries to dredge out the teaching behind the documents, he finds that he is accompanied in all his studies by the assertion that the physically impossible happened. Again and again the statement is made quite flatly, but very often it is just taken for granted, mentioned in passing, as something which everybody knew. To leave out the miracles makes nonsense of the Gospel. In fact the actions of Christ *are* the Gospel. The teaching does not precede them; it accompanies and proceeds from them.

Nevertheless, every time that we take any one incident, or one story, we find that we have to admit that the historical evidence for

⁶ R. H. Lightfoot, *History and Interpretation of the Gospels*, (Harper, New York, 1935) p. 113. It needs to be said however, that he modified this statement somewhat later, especially when he realized, with surprise, that many of his readers did not recognize the last clause as a quotation, or know its context.

that particular story is rather shaky, if not sometimes actually dubious. So it is with the Resurrection, for which the historical evidence is singularly inconclusive. We cannot lay it out in array and say, "This proves that there was a physical Resurrection," but it is equally true that the historical evidence forbids us to dismiss it. We are left awkwardly straddled between the two.

This is the kind of catalog which normally leaves the godly aghast, faced with the apparent undermining of their Faith. In fact, it is exactly the sort of thing which makes people say that the University and religion are best kept separate, though in truth it should surprise no one who has taken seriously the steadfast refusal of God to give a "sign" which should compel belief.

Of course, the situation for the believer is not quite as stark as this. Few historians today would go so far as to say that the Jews never went to Egypt at all, or that Jesus never lived, though it should be noticed that both these theories have been seriously put forward in the past. If one starts from the possibility that the Biblical record is trustworthy, it is easy to show the reasonableness of much of the story. Parts of the Book of Exodus can be most satisfactorily explained upon the basis of a Jewish sojourn in Egypt; the picture of the journey through the desert is certainly intelligible in the light of what we know of the region; and the Gospel accounts have very considerable intrinsic claims to credibility, which have been strengthened rather than impugned as a result of questioning.

However, overwhelmingly the strongest argument for the essential truth of both accounts is the life of the Jewish and Christian communities, which even the skeptic must recognize as a persistent fact, and with which he must come to terms. He cannot deny the obstinate continuance of the Jewish community despite centuries of pogroms and discrimination, nor the equally obstinate presence of the Christian Church which in its early days grew not so much despite as because of persecution. There is a strong tendency in some Christian circles to use the evident life of the Church as a proof of the Resurrection, but this again is to compel belief. The

fact of a living community is by itself no evidence of the historical truth of its claims, and the historian may certainly point out that in the Church of the Latter Day Saints, persecution has been endured on the basis of what he can only call a hallucination.

As with the Bible, so with the Church; the historical and extra-historical character of the events cannot be disengaged from each other. The miracle stories of the Gospel, the events of Easter Sunday, the living and growing Church, remain a stumbling block to the secular and religious mind alike. The agnostic cannot deny them entirely, because they cannot be disentangled from what he has no reason to disbelieve, and the believer cannot use them to compel belief in others without having them come to pieces in his hands.

Of course, it may be objected that too much time has been spent on this, and that this is an insignificant part of total history and that it may, for that reason, be allowed a special explanation. But this will not do. To the scientific mind nothing is insignificant, and exceptions of this order are intolerable. Therefore, one cannot cordon off the history of Israel so that it does not infect the rest of historical material. And yet, if the historian accepts the relevance of the Christian interpretation to Palestinian history, he must ask whether the American Revolution or World War II could also be described as the product of God's activity. None of this makes the problem of the Church and the University more simple; in fact it makes it more difficult, since it means that running through every discipline is a strange, undemarcated frontier between that which properly belongs to this world of time and space, and that which cannot be explained entirely in these terms.

This explains the disappointment felt by many Christians at the publication of the last volumes of *A Study of History*, to which reference has already been made. They took the first six volumes to be a work of Christian prophecy, because the writer seemed to them to describe so accurately the inner weakness of mankind. This weakness is visible to the historian, using historical evidence and

the normal criteria of historical study, because it belongs to this world of time and space, and we can say therefore that the historian, *qua* historian, can recognize sin, even though he may not call it by that name. However, he cannot, *qua* historian, see the Redemption. He can see only the earthly accidents, the clothing of this event.

This is where the crisis lies. To demand that the psychologist shall, *as a psychologist*, recognize the difference between the mind of the man who has, and the man who has not, been "born again" is to ask him to do what he cannot do. With the best will in the world he can see no more than the same processes at work. He can no more establish contact with the new forces that are making them work, than the two dimensional man could comprehend the shape of a box.

Yet the teaching of a converted psychologist is not necessarily different from that of a non-Christian one. The study of the mental processes remains a valid study, and in fact the actual processes remain the same. Plane geometry is not rendered an invalid study because of the existence of solid geometry. Therefore, Christians must not argue that non-Christians should not be allowed to teach, or that the secular university should close its doors, since they cannot deny the truth of what is being done there. Within its own limits the University is justified; it exists in its own right. Yet it finds itself opposed by the Christian Church, which nevertheless cannot deny this right. Why this should be so is summed up in Saint John's statement that the world cannot receive the Spirit because it cannot see him (John 14:17).

The Two Communities

If the argument thus far has been sound, we need to recognize the existence, under the providence of God, of two communities on either side of the frontier, each having a right to exist and possessing a certain autonomy, although, since final authority pertains only to the Creator, the autonomy of neither of them is absolute. These two communities for convenience we call the University, or the community of learning, and the Church, or the community of faith. Yet, though they lie on different sides of the frontier, they cannot be kept separate, for the subject of their concern is in large measure the same. However, the approach of each to this common material and their two roles or functions are different.

Many attempts have been made to define the role of the University, and it has already been suggested that one of the most generally quoted definitions, "a community of scholars and students engaged in the search for truth," is misleading because the normal undergraduate college is seldom occupied in this search. Another common, but somewhat less pretentious, claim, that the universities in any society exist to transmit to each succeeding generation the mores and culture of that society, is also insufficient. Not only is it too static to be stimulating, but it fails to recognize that universities anywhere have a duty not merely to transmit the culture, but, as far as lies within their power, to challenge and correct it.

One might, perhaps, put these two definitions together and ar-

rive somewhat nearer the heart of the matter if one said that every section of the University has at least a duty to defend the truth. This is an unending struggle to maintain standards which extends very much further than the establishment of "truth" in the sense in which this would be understood in a European institution, for every activity of the University, however inclusive the curriculum and however technical the subject, has a certain integrity which is not to be confused with mere efficiency. It is not enough for students to be efficient at business administration; they must learn also to take thought for the *quality* of the work that is done. This battle for integrity is something in which every person in the University may be engaged, and the warfare to maintain the truth is one from which there can be no discharge.

But the battle is hindered by the inability of all men easily to see their own mistakes, and two things appear to be necessary for that kind of criticism which is really constructive: the specialized knowledge that comes only from within and the wider experience that comes only from without. These two things need to be combined. It is idle to stand entirely outside, and criticize those who are within, because from that position one cannot see what is possible, or be conscious of the full power of the various forces that are at work. Yet those who are within are in obvious danger of being blinded by their own closeness to the problems, for the inability of the player really to see the game is proverbial.

It is here that the excessive specialization, and in fact isolation, of today becomes dangerous, for the critical problem is how the outsider can get in and how the insider can be enabled to stand without. It cannot be done at all if each is not prepared to learn from the other. Each must be ready to humble himself: the outsider to begin to acquire, slowly and painfully, the necessary knowledge which places him on the inside, and the insider to admit that his specialized knowledge may be a hindrance to him, and to strive for a wider experience. Of course, in the process neither must leave behind the experience or the knowledge that is already his.

In the specialized situation of the modern University everyone is already firmly inside some part of the University's activity, but as firmly outside all the rest, and, as things are at the moment, this situation is in danger of becoming fossilized. On the one hand, the man who interests himself seriously in subjects other than his own is in danger of being criticized by his colleagues for dissipating his energies and failing to keep abreast of his subject. His attempts, therefore, to criticize from without are felt to have little value. On the other hand, those who are really without are resented when they try to get inside, and their right to express an opinion frequently challenged.

It is easy, of course, to place all the blame for this on "specialization," but integration requires much more than a formal interchange of ideas; it requires that men should *want* to be told when they are wrong, and should *want* to submit themselves and their independence to an overriding common purpose, and should long for that discipline and correction which a desire for integrity imposes. Only when there is this attitude of mind can illusion be examined, challenged, and overthrown.

But men, left to themselves, do not want these things, and they are often unable to see the overwhelming reason for them. It is just here that the Church should be of help, because from her understanding of man's situation repentance and humility are seen to be primary necessities, and reasonable and proper to life itself. For Christians they should not be adventitious aids, but the conditions of existence. Equally, the Church sees the unity of Truth as a necessary result of the one Creator, and community as the natural form of man's true existence. The kind of specialization which leads to isolation should be abhorrent to her, and so must all divided and collapsing communities; and therefore, though it is the duty of the University to search out, to teach, and throughout to *maintain* truth, only the Christian Church can provide the atmosphere, the climate of opinion, in which the truth can be told.

The Function of the Church

This last statement is likely to be attacked by both the non-believer, who will think that it goes too far, and by the believer, who will probably say that it does not go far enough and that it leaves all the really constructive work to someone else. Those who belong to the community of faith would often prefer it to have some more immediate and positive goal, such as that of procuring fellowship or creating community. But such a goal, exactly because it is more immediate, is for that reason less positive. "Fellowship" and "community" are among the miracles which the magicians of Egypt can also perform, and the non-believers are right to suggest that such miracles are by no means unique to the Church. They characterize the Communist cell, the Israeli *kibbutz* or communal settlement, the resistance movements in all those countries where they exist, and the amateur dramatic company at work upon a production. In other words, whether or not fellowship and community come into existence does not depend upon the Church, but upon the society in question, and whether it has or has not a common purpose, which must be a purpose proper to that society. Any attempt by the devout to impose upon the academic world a sense of fellowship and community which has not grown out of its own devotion to integrity and the cause of sound learning is an attempt doomed to failure. The Church's role must be rather that of ensuring that the community thus brought into being from the loins of the University is of such a nature that it can endure, and that it will not be destroyed by exposure to the corrosive and searing effects of truth.

In part the Church can do this because, as we have seen, her Creed provides that position of security from which every question, however frightening, can be asked. But she can do more than this, because she is concerned not only with intellectual argument, but

with life itself, and to her has been committed the function of making new men in Christ. This is a patient, and sometimes very slow, activity, partaking of all the limitations attendant upon the work of God, for he will never force the pace by a miraculous intervention, or damage the delicate physical fabric of what he has made. It must not be imagined, as it is by so many, that those who become Christian are changed overnight into something quite different from what they were before. Nevertheless, if the Church is doing her job, the slow process of re-creation continues, and here and there, when Christians come together for some common purpose, there is brought into being, though sometimes only for a little while, the unbreakable community, the fellowship which cannot be destroyed by the truth because every member knows that whatever he says, and however damaging it may seem to be, he cannot make an enemy because of it.

Such meetings are tragically few, and the gatherings of churchmen are manifestly but seldom of this character. No educational or sociological techniques, no study of the group process, can achieve it, for it is the work of the Holy Spirit alone. If I may hazard a guess, based upon nearly thirty years of Christian encounter, students achieve this atmosphere more often than anyone else. They do so only rarely, it must be admitted, but they have at least this advantage: they know, however dimly and inadequately, that they have a duty to learn, and, if they are Christian, they know they have a duty to repent. In such an atmosphere the Spirit can work, and there the most painful truths are spoken, not to destroy community, but to cement it. For this reason, a student conference, whatever its manifold shortcomings, can occasionally be a most satisfying academic and Christian experience.¹

¹ I should like at this time to pay tribute to such a conference, the Quadrennial Meeting of the Student Volunteer Movement at Athens, Ohio, in December 1955, at which over three thousand students were present, nearly half of them being students from some eighty overseas countries. The extraordinary manner in which Arab and Jewish students, and also Japanese and Koreans, were enabled in the space of one short week to say the most

The Excellence of the University

Nevertheless, though Christians have long understood the Christian community properly conceived, to be a new creation and a peculiar people, those to whom has been given the power to become the children of God,² they have no right to imagine the Christian Church to be the sole repository of all the virtues. Since the academic community exists in its own right within the providence of God, and since it is built historically upon Christian foundations, it often displays within itself, and sometimes perhaps despite itself, the marks of a community which is being used by God for his own purposes. One of the most common and most serious of all Christian errors is that of despising both the aim and the character of the secular academic world, as if without the kindly guidance of the Church it could not manage to be good.

According to the Christian understanding, the power of God is in no sense limited, and he may work out his purposes also through those who have never heard of him, or have even explicitly rejected him. Christian people, therefore, have great need to listen with humility and obedience to those who do not share their beliefs so that they may see where the power of God is at work doing always the things which he requires to be done, and fulfilling his unshakable purpose of bringing men and women home to himself.

In particular, they need to admit the real humility of so many scholars, both faculty and students, of the professor who recognizes that he may be given a new insight, even into his own subject, by

shattering things to each other, and yet grow towards each other because these things had been said, could not but impress everyone who was present. It was this conference which sparked the prolonged and searching study of the Life and Mission of the Church, which is now proceeding in student movements throughout the world, another example of the ability which the Christian Church exhibits, though only occasionally, to examine herself and her illusions.

² See John 1:12; II Cor. 5:17; I Pet. 2:9.

a student, and the students (and how many of them there are!) who accept with patience the scathing criticism of a paper which had cost them much trouble and study. Such people seek to dominate neither their subject nor each other, and are convinced that what they are studying is greater than themselves, and that they must seek to serve it rather than manipulate it.

They should also admit the scholar's deep and compelling desire to make all things new, and to enter into the mystery of creation. For this they are prepared to sacrifice, if necessary, both their theories and themselves, and even their families and their possessions. The so-called "coldness" with which the outside world rebukes the scientist comes from this overmastering passion, which characterizes as much the creative artist as the scholar. It leads, the Christian should observe, to a sometimes surprising, and certainly impressive disregard for all that the New Testament would describe as "mammon."

They should further admit the serious respect which the true scholar pays to the material universe as inherently worth studying, and to the mind as the proper instrument for the study of it. The academic world may have many and obvious failings, but throughout the centuries it has on the whole been very faithful to this belief. Yet it is often recognized that intellectual knowledge is not the whole of knowledge, and almost every campus has many faithful and devoted teachers who respect and honor the whole of God's creation in each of their students, and are humble and patient before it. In the true sense of that much misused quotation, "these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves" (Rom. 2:14).

It may well be objected, either that there are very many who do not live according to these standards and many also who have isolated or exaggerated them, or else that these things are no virtues, because they are part of the job. Certainly there are many, probably the majority, who neglect or misuse these standards, but, as one who has grown up from childhood in the university scene, I can say only that those who do not know the University would be surprised

by how many such people they would find there. If one objects that the virtues belong to the job, the argument is rather confirmed than overthrown, for, as Saint Augustine has pointed out, though it may be good to be able not to sin, it is better not to be able to sin. To say that these are the characteristics of the job is to say the job has a rightness and integrity of its own, and that deluded Christian who thinks he must import these virtues from the treasures of the Church has not yet seen what God has wrought.

Word and Sacrament

The contribution of the Christian Church, therefore, is not to "paint the lily or gild refined gold," giving to God's creation that which he has already endowed it, but faithfully perform her ancient duty of preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments. This is as much her offering to the intellectual world as it is to the world of business or politics or the home and family. It does not mean, however, as many harassed clergy are tempted to think that it means, merely to urge both students and faculty to come regularly to the eleven o'clock service, or even only the faithful daily celebration of the Eucharist. Mere attendance at church is neither a meritorious nor a purgative act, and there are services around the campus, even in respectable churches, from which the honest Christian might be well advised to stay away. They are services without integrity, and have nothing to say to those whose function is the maintenance of truth.

Thus the preaching and teaching given in a campus church must never be allowed to fall intellectually below the standards required by the University of its students. One of the most disturbing reflections which must occasionally come into the mind of any thoughtful Christian member of a faculty is that the more faithfully he does his job, the more certainly, as things are at present, he must be driving the students away from their churches. The academic duty is to be critical, to examine, and to question, and it

does violence to this duty to expect that all this shall be put aside on Sunday morning, as if it were an unseemly and a worldly activity. Students, therefore, who have been trained in this tradition, should properly be shocked by those many sermons which, if they had been presented as undergraduate essays, would not have received a passing grade. It is not that sermons should be abstruse—far from it—but they should be intellectually sound, capable of being discussed, questioned, and dissected.

It follows further that worship must never be a "gimmick," a means by which something else is achieved. Either this offering of ourselves to God, which is our "reasonable service," is the whole of our lives, or we should not be doing it. A campus church, therefore, should be especially wary of using acts of worship to promote anything, even fellowship or a worshipful attitude of mind. Worship, which is the expression of belief, may no more be induced by extraneous pressure than belief may be brought about by miracle. The kind of Sunday service where hymns are used as a means of getting the choir in and out of church, and where the lessons are chosen according to the whim of the minister, or because the congregation likes those passages, is intolerable in the academic world. So are those services which are watered down to satisfy the majority. There are arguments for and arguments against required chapel in a church-related college, but there can be no arguments at all for what is not honest. Those colleges, for instance, which belong to a liturgical tradition, and require the students to attend their services, and then alter or modify the liturgy, are not telling the truth. The Episcopal service in which a hymn is substituted for the *Te Deum*, and the lectionary is deserted, no longer does that which the service of Morning Prayer is intended to do: set forth the history of our salvation. Students would have good reason for objecting to having to attend that kind of service.

The "Word" is the whole service, and it is the whole activity of the Church, the setting forth before the world of the climactic events through which God has acted. It is uncompromising history. It

says to the world, "Here are the events; make of them what you will." Every exposition, every moral lesson, and all godly counsel must be based upon these events, or they cannot stand.

The Sacrament is, as it were, the key to the Word, for Sunday by Sunday it presents to all those who have eyes to see the manner in which God works, and the fashion in which the events are to be interpreted. The Sacrament is the never-to-be-forgotten lesson that God's whole method is to take the physical, material things of this world, wherever and at whatever time, they are offered to him, and through these things remake the world, reconciling it to himself. That the things must be *offered*, since God will never compel the service of men, is one of the most regular of the great Biblical themes; that when they are offered, he uses them as the means whereby he acts with power is so much part of Christian experience as to have an almost "scientific" quality, something which any man can discover for himself if he is prepared to accept the conditions of the experiment. The Sacrament is of a piece with the Incarnation, and indeed the means whereby Christ is held still to offer himself for men; it is the assurance that anything, however unpromising it may seem, can if it is freely given become part of the means of the new creation. This is the message of the Church to the University: that there is no learned paper, no essay, no quiz, no assignment to be done, no review to be written, no class to be taught, which cannot be offered to God, and be used by him for the fulfilment of the true nature and purpose of the University. It has never been a part of the Christian belief that a thing must be perfect before it can be offered; it will suffice if it is the best that can be procured at the moment. It is not because it is good that it is offered; it is because it is offered that it is good.

Reconciliation Rather Than Conquest

But if the Christian Church maintains, as she is bound to do, that the events upon which she bases her Faith are events of his-

torical experience, having taken place within this world of time and space, she maintains also by this statement that they are events upon which she has no longer the sole right to pass judgment. If her Faith is built upon history, then what is historical in it is subject to historical research and analysis, the kind of judgment which only historians can make. If she insists, as she cannot help doing, that the Resurrection is in some manner a fact of the physical, temporal universe and, though transcending it, is not an escape from it, she proclaims thereby that physicists have a right to discuss it. If she says that the community, the society or the nation, are part of her competence, she requires herself by that very claim to study seriously the teaching of the sociologists and the political scientists. Every statement that the affairs of this universe, "the compass of the world and they that dwell therein," are her concern is an affirmation, not merely that she has a right to speak, but that she has a duty to listen.

So she must stand, cap in hand, before the University, willing to be instructed, and laying down no preliminary conditions about the manner of that instruction. She cannot withhold the Resurrection and Pentecost from the brutal analysis of even the pagan scholar, and she cannot insist that the biologist's researches into the origin of life conform to her conception of it. The innumerable facts of the universe are wholly within the competence of the University, and the Church, *qua* Church, has no right to pronounce upon them. The Kingdom has been taken away from her and has been given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

This does not mean, of course, that she must be entirely silent. She must certainly begin by being obedient to the University on the University's own terms; she must attend *in statu pupillaris*, present herself at the lectures, take notes, learn them, and read the necessary books. She must graduate before she can be admitted to the discussions which lie behind the instruction and contribute to the interpretation of it. But then, it must be clear, she cannot be forbidden to speak, and be told that her knowledge and experience

are irrelevant. The University cannot lay it down in advance, as a principle of its existence, that the Christian understanding has nothing to contribute to the intellectual conversation.

It will be seen, then, that neither Church nor University can overrule the other. The Church must realize that the University is not only capable of standing alone, but it needs must stand alone. It is not merely idle at the present time to speak of "converting" the University, of turning it into a Christian University; it is actually wrong. For the universities of the United States to be "converted," to employ only Christian teachers and so on, would be a sin against the manifest truth that instruction in physics can be given admirably by non-Christians. Christians would often like to believe that to be a great musician a man must have the religious profundity of a Bach, but there is strong evidence that this is not so. The University is therefore not being dishonest when it makes no enquiry into a man's religious beliefs before granting him a degree. It is recognizing a fact.

Yet the academic world must realize that it has no monopoly of scholarship, and it should treat the Church with much less intellectual arrogance than it often does. The whole activity of the Christian Church may be unpalatable and even alarming to the secular academic mind, but it should not for that reason be disregarded. There are too many introductory textbooks to the history of the Roman Empire which suggest that the teaching of Saint Paul was merely a matter of the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. It is a matter on which every relevant document is easily obtainable for a few cents, and it should not be possible for the intellectual world so flagrantly to disregard the evidence and get away with it, any more than it should have been possible for the Cambridge Modern History to be written as if the whole Christian missionary movement had never even happened.

So at present the two communities continue, maintaining an uneasy and suspicious co-existence, each unable to bring the other within its orbit. The community of faith cannot be the arbiter of

all intellectual knowledge, which must continually range far beyond her; but the community of learning is incapable of living in a fifth dimension, and therefore that which gives meaning to all her knowledge is outside her grasp. Neither community can be the master. If they are to be brought together, it must be by an act of reconciliation and not by conquest.

The Christian in the College

It may be felt by many that the argument has now moved very far from the troubles outlined in the opening chapters, and the strange “as if” philosophies by which the academic world contrives to live. To this structure of illusion, this confused and confusing pattern of unreality, the Christian Church has been given a word to speak: “Lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” (Luke 21:28). The basis of this confidence is that God has come himself to men. This does not, however, mean that therefore the Christian has all knowledge, since truth must forever remain beyond the reach of men, who must for that reason be forever seeking it. Nevertheless, in the Christian understanding, the coming of God is not merely an idea; it is an irrevocable event which has already taken place. For this, at least, men have not still to search. Nor is it valid only for some and not for others; in Archbishop Temple’s famous phrase, “Either it is true for all men everywhere, or it is not true for any man anywhere.”

It is the Christian argument that this event, itself the culmination of a series of preparatory events, sets forward the principles whereby meaninglessness, illusion, and chaos may be faced and overcome, for it displays in visible fashion the methods and purposes of God’s

dealings with what he has made. These may be summarized under six heads:

First, his purpose is Creation, which, when it is applied to what has been already made, is rather re-creation and reconciliation. It is always the replacement of chaos by order.

Second, his method is Incarnation, or perhaps it would be better to call it Sacrament. He respects his creation, and works patiently through the normal processes of the universe until there comes a point at which all men must say, "This is different; this is a *new* thing." Thus the study of the universe is entirely proper and to the glory of God, but the danger is real that men may be so fascinated by the preliminary processes that they do not recognize when God has acted with power and a new thing has been made.

Third, his method is humility and sacrifice. By this means alone can reconciliation come. That men and God may be reconciled, there must be One who is entirely God and entirely man, and each must give himself utterly to the other. By no other means can men themselves be reconciled, or the "multiversity" become a "university." Yet on these terms it can be done.

Fourth, his method is Resurrection. This means, not only that Christ is living now, but further, that the justification of all that we do must not be sought on this side of death. On this basis their thinking is limited who try to live and act within a closed system and permit no intrusion from without.

Fifth, his method is personal. When God comes to men, he comes as a person. Even at the risk of disturbing the academic world and offending its canons of objectivity, Christians must insist that some answer has to be given, and that the real academic illusion would be to imagine that none was needed. Every man and woman who is confronted by a person must make some response, even if the response is to slam the door. To stand undecided whether to open the door or close it is not possible even

when the person who knocks is another man. To be undecided means that the door is kept closed.

Sixth, the person who comes to men is God Almighty, Maker and Master of all that is. It is not a light thing that is being done in the University, and men must one day give an answer to God for how the whole of the academic activity has been conducted. They are responsible to him for the use they have made of his creation. That kind of false "objectivity" which means taking no responsibility for the use made of our research is a denial of God. It is sin.

The Unbridged Chasm

This is the word which is to be said, but the organized churches of today are in a bad position for saying it, because that external experience and internal knowledge, both of which are necessary to reconciliation, are denied them. They are quite clearly cut off from the *activity* of the academic world, especially in the state universities and city colleges, so that they do not share the specialized knowledge of those inside. However, they are so identified with the *thinking* of the University that they cannot bring to bear the external experience which is necessary to constructive criticism. It is, in fact, remarkable that the churches, which have so often been the educational pioneers, do not today necessarily provide the best education, and certainly not an education which shows any marked difference in quality from that of a good secular institution. There are, instead, many church-related colleges whose history has been a struggle to free themselves from the power of the church to which they were attached, in order that they might more effectively perform the task for which they were created.

Moreover, the seminaries of the churches only too often repeat all the faults of secular colleges, and seem unaware that there is anything to criticize. They provide an interesting example of the

helplessness of the present churches in academic questions, for in them, if anywhere, some new quality should be seen. Both faculty and students are all committed Christians, and the young man who enters a seminary for the first time might have some justification for thinking that there he would have a new academic experience. But this does not seem to happen, and many seminarians would go further and complain that the academic activity is less well understood there than in the undergraduate college which they had previously attended. In particular the complaint seems to be of a more rigid system, more required courses, less time for reading, too many compulsory outside activities, and in general such a pressure of work that it leads to an increase of, rather than a release from, the textbook method.

Many, of course, would wish to defend the seminaries from this somewhat sweeping criticism, and it must be admitted that it is too brief to be fair. Yet the uncomfortable fact appears to remain that the seminaries do not set a standard of academic excellence, but are content instead to follow the standard set by others.

Even when one turns to the direct contacts which the churches make with the University, it is difficult not to be deeply troubled. Only a minority of the members of the University are members also of a church, and of these many are merely nominal, or, at best, worthy citizens unaware that there is any crisis. The student associations display an alarmingly high proportion of freshmen to seniors, which suggest that there is a strong drift away from the Church during the years at college. Certainly, only a handful of graduate students feel any responsibility for the association to which they once belonged. It is further disquieting to meet so often the question, either spoken or implicit, "How can we bear witness in the University without stirring up trouble?" or to discover the various churches so concerned with providing security for their own members, and apparently counting it gain to the Church of God when people move from one branch of it to another. It is dis-

quieting also to find the college clergy so occupied with the emotional problems of the faculty and students, as if they had learned with relief that these strange animals were people after all, and had the same problems as other people. So they do, but they have also special intellectual problems, and concerning these they receive but little help.

One cannot help feeling that the churches today are frightened by the University, frightened by its size, by the vast extent of intellectual knowledge which they do not understand, and by the fury which they fear they would raise if they began to ask unwanted questions. They are frightened also by the very fact of a great, self-sufficient community to which they do not have the entree, and as a result they think that the best thing they can do is to care for their own members so that they are not overwhelmed, help them in those personal problems which the churches, to do them justice, do understand, and integrate them into a parish so that they do not lose touch with the "normal" world outside. The "University problem" in fact, seems to be so gigantic and so utterly intimidating, that the great temptation is to take refuge, to indulge in that kind of withdrawal which is mere retreat, and that activity which is no more than busyness.

This kind of escape can take two forms. There can be the refusal to leave the comfortable home where one already belongs, or there can be a convulsive leap across the chasm to take refuge with the other group, while maintaining only a pretense of belonging to the previous community.

Into the first group fall obviously those very many faculty and students for whom "religion" is a matter of regular Sunday worship, at which they may be very faithful. In so far as they admit it into their daily lives, it is concerned largely with personal relationships. In the same group are the clergy and church workers who feel satisfied if the students can be persuaded to come to church on Sunday morning, and who therefore tend to think that the Sun-

day evening meeting is something of an extra. Such people feel no necessity to interest themselves, for instance, in the courses which the students are following.

The second group includes all the fellow-travelers, the clericalized laymen and the intellectualized priest. Among students there are those who in a liturgical church make conscientious acolytes, familiar with every detail and nuance of the ritual, and who elsewhere can be relied upon the "solo," which seems at times to be an almost integral part of university religious activities. Far, far too many of these students, it may be said in passing, are urged by well meaning clergy and friends to offer themselves for the ministry. At the faculty level this form of escape shows itself in a thorough knowledge of the right religious books and all the ecclesiastical jargon, as well as often a rigid churchmanship. Among the clergy there are the theological intellectuals, the "experts" on the texts, the college chaplains who are familiar with all the psychological techniques, but have allowed themselves to forget Saint Theresa of Avila and Saint Thomas à Kempis, and no longer understand Evelyn Underhill, even when they read her.

It is only too easy to slip imperceptibly into one or other of these escapes, and, once the escape has been made and the strain removed, it is almost automatic to believe that the problem has been solved. One of the most interesting features of discussions between faculty and clergy is the strange arrogance which characterizes both sides. The speakers seem so unready to learn, so insistent that all would be well if others would submit to their interpretation. "Are we blind also?" said the Pharisees to Jesus, and his answer was, "If ye were blind, ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth" (John 9:40-41). If a man escapes, if he lets go his hold of one side or the other, he may escape the strain, the "earthquake, wind, and fire" of his existence, but he will have ceased to be of any real value. He will think that he has solved the problem only because he has denied that the problem exists.

The Sacrament in the University

It is here that the sacramental understanding of the divine activity becomes of quite immeasurable importance. The organized churches may be largely helpless, but this does not mean that the Lord's arm is shortened that he cannot save. In such a situation there are always "seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (I Kings 19:18), and in the University there are many sincere, devoted, and—which is almost more important—*thoughtful* Christians, willing if called upon to serve their Master. Often the chief sign is a certain restlessness, a questioning of the University's values, but here and there one meets those whose thinking has gone further than this. Nor is this all. For every person who is in a sense active there are others who would willingly act if they knew what to do.

These often very lonely individuals, who are to be found among students, faculty, and administration, are the Sacrament for the University, they and the academic work that they do. In the present University situation the clergy and the church workers are largely peripheral, and it is Christian students and faculty who form the Church-in-the-University, they and no one else. The whole work of the Church must be done through them, and their minds, their hands, their writing, their teaching, and their studying, term papers, and essays, are those fragile, earthy, physical things through which the Creator is content to act with power. The Bread and the Wine, the water of Baptism, the reading of Scripture, and the corporate prayer, all these central activities of the Christian Church, may be unknown to a large part of the academic world because of the arrogance or blindness of University or Church, or more probably of both. Indeed, if one takes seriously the argument of the Prophets, they may all have been withheld by the will of God, since they have not properly been understood. Yet, no arrogance

or blindness, and no earthly authority, can ever forbid God to be incarnate, or prevent the creation of a Sacrament, not even in a world which sees no essential difference between the Eucharist and the mysteries of Mithras.

For a Christian to say that he himself is the Sacrament for the University must seem to any who hear or read it as astounding and even wildly conceited claim, and it is not less but more astounding to Christians themselves, to those who have some inkling of what a sacrament is. But there comes a time when every man must ask himself the question of Hillel, "Being for myself, what am I? And if not now, when?"¹ If his answer to the question is to place himself as unreservedly as he can at the disposal of God, conscious that God is prepared to use such ordinary and ineffective material, it is humility and not arrogance that is behind the claim.

Let us then suppose that someone has counted the cost, and has decided, all honor to him, to offer himself to be used in this process of reconciliation. What then? Very often, apparently, nothing! This is part of the frustration of the process, of what is, it must be admitted, at times the infuriating character of the Christian life. So much of it has to be spent in waiting. No man can create the conditions in which he can take effective action, and he may have to spend many years in the wilderness before the situation demands him.

Naturally, these years do not need to be wasted. They can usefully be spent in preparation, both the intellectual study which is proper to the University, and the spiritual discipline which is proper to the Church. Indeed, a lifetime is not a month too long if this preparation is not to take the place of professional integrity. A professor of chemistry or biology, after all, is paid to teach these subjects, and he must maintain his standards in them, keep abreast of scientific research, and be faithful and thorough in his dealings with his students. To give an hour each day, perhaps in the unattractive twilight before breakfast, is not only a discipline in itself,

¹ *Pirke Aboth*, I, 14.

but the most he has a right to give. To devote more time than this would be only too likely to carry him across the chasm to the deceptive security of the ecclesiastical camp.

Equally, the college chaplain, however eager for rapprochement with the University, must submit to this double discipline of training and restraint. He needs to master some other subject than theology, and acquaint himself with the kind of thinking that goes on in disciplines in which he was not trained, but this must not be done at the expense of the thing he was appointed to do. The minister who neglects the saying of the daily office, the steady reading and study of the Scriptures, and the training of the devotional life, is as guilty of dilettantism as the scholar who allows the scientific journals to pile up on his desk because he has become fascinated by Barth.

Each, therefore, must look forward to a long time of study, of the patient building up of experience and knowledge, of the collection of supplies against the day of need. This for both scholar and cleric is the true meaning of "treasure in heaven." Those who would be used by God in the University must set themselves to acquire knowledge in a variety of fields, gathering it, sorting it, organizing it, and storing it. An immense amount of it may seem to be of very little immediate use, but if there is to be any real intellectual encounter, and not merely little skirmishes, this patient, endless study must continue, in the earnest intention that the knowledge and experience shall be there to be used when the time for it shall arise.

In all this it is necessary to wait upon God, and with equal patience and thoroughness to train that part of oneself which is alive to him. It is not to be expected that the history professor or the engineering student shall give the same amount of *time* to prayer as is required of the clergyman, part of whose job it is to teach other people to pray, but the same attitude of mind is needful in them all, the same humble, unquestioning readiness to be used.

It is quite impossible to overemphasize the importance, the abso-

lute and vital necessity of it. Accompanying every person who is engaged in this task there must march, step by step, the tremendous and the awesome presence of the Living God. Spencer Leeson has said in his Bampton Lectures that the teacher should go to his classroom as the priest goes to his altar,² and the same is equally true of the administrator going to his desk or the student to his books. Properly understood, it means that no man should ever enter an office, classroom, lecture hall, library, or fraternity meeting, without, as it were, pausing at the door to pray thus within himself, "If it shall be thy purpose to use this place for the accomplishment of thy will, then here am I to be used. If thou shalt desire that I am to be used unconsciously, then I am content. If thou shalt wish to use me as a conscious agent, then I pray earnestly that thou wilt awake me to the occasion when it comes. Left to myself, I know that there is danger that I shall pass it by."

It is easy, of course, to say this, but to acquire this attitude of mind is quite another thing. The discipline and training which checks a man before every activity, and makes him both say *and mean* this prayer, is something which comes only as the result of real hard work, of years of prayer and fasting. It is useless to pretend otherwise.

The disciplined mind, and the disciplined spirit, are therefore of the greatest importance. It is not easy to accept that one shall be used unconsciously, that all that will happen to a professor is that some student will turn over in his mind a chance sentence from a lecture, and that some years later it will bear fruit in his life, although he himself has completely forgotten where he heard it. It is not easy for a student to grasp that there is no necessity that he shall ever be an important person on campus, or even, to use the modern jargon, "accepted." It is also very difficult to accept that other people shall be used, and even more difficult to accept that they shall be used by preference.

² Spencer Leeson, *Christian Education* (Longmans, London, 1947).

The Witness of a Christian

Yet there is nothing static about this. Equally with the necessity that the mind and the spirit shall be disciplined is the necessity that they shall be *lively*—vigorous, nourished, and ready for action at any time. There is no knowing at what juncture and in what circumstances a bold and conscious stand will be needed.

For the faculty person, of course, there is always the chance that such an occasion may arise in class. It is not necessary that this shall be only a personal problem of relationship with some student, though this may occur. There is also the possibility that the subject itself may present the occasion. There must, of course, be no question of manipulating the subject to this end, not even if the subject under discussion is Religion, and no question of trying to teach "Christian History" or "Christian Biology." If a professor's appointment is to teach Islamic History, then Islamic History is what he must teach, and not interlard his lectures with arguments against the Muslim religion. To do otherwise is dishonest.

Nevertheless, if he is a good teacher, discussion will be encouraged, and will, if the subject itself is to be well learned, range around the subject. "International Relations" will, if it is allowed to, raise questions of justice and independence, and of what is involved in such concepts, and since an immense part of the University curriculum deals with a study of man or his activities, the question is always near the surface of whether man is really the kind of animal that the textbook seems to think he is. The job of the Christian teacher is not to instil the teaching of the Church on any subject, and even in the department of Religion that is his job only if that is the title of the course. His job is always to persuade his students to *think*, and to make up their minds on every subject on the basis of knowledge and not of hearsay. On this understanding, he may have to question the teaching of the Church, or

at least of some churches, and even more, perhaps, he may have to question their activity.

The occasion may arise elsewhere in the life of the University, for teacher or student or administrator. It may occur in a faculty meeting, in a fraternity, over some question of college finance, or indeed almost anywhere at all. It may come as the result of a direct challenge, of a proposal by someone else which needs on Christian grounds to be opposed, or it may come by default, by the serious neglect of some matter which, if justice is to be done, needs to be considered.

It is, however, not the primary duty of a Christian in the University to see that the Church is getting a square deal, that there is a department of Religion, that students are set free to attend church on Saints' days, that classes are excused during Religious Emphasis Week, that a chapel is permitted on the campus, or that there are Christians on the faculty in the department of Philosophy. Any of these things, it is true, *may* require his attention, but there is no one, necessary "Christian" viewpoint on any of them, and it may be the will of God that all shall be opposed. God is not always glorified because men think that he is, and the Bible gives us no support for believing that he always wants a church or chapel built. Indeed, we have every authority for thinking that he sometimes wants them destroyed.

The primary duty of the Christian student or faculty member is to maintain the real integrity of the University. It is only thus that he combines Church and University as an integral part of his own being and only thus that he may be said to belong to the activity of God Incarnate, and to be for the University a sacrament. It goes without saying that no Christian teacher should tolerate that form of teaching which requires the student to learn only the textbook and the lecture notes. However, if the integrity of the University is to be preserved, *no Christian student should tolerate it either*. He may be afraid that to do more than this will affect his grade adversely, for teachers do exist, alas, who resent this im-

plied criticism of their methods, but this should not deter him. At present it is doubtful whether there are any students who think that this is a question of the Christian Faith at all.

It may be necessary for Christians to champion some aspect of the truth which is in danger of being smothered. There are, for example, a very large number of foreign students in American universities and colleges today, and the Christian, aware of this, must ask why they have come, in the sense of asking what place they have in the purpose of God. The answer cannot be merely the selfish one of acquiring an education, though this may naturally be why they themselves imagine they have come. God's purposes must go deeper. It seems at least possible that one reason is that the American people, to whom God has permitted such an amazing accession of power in the world, shall be for their education brought face to face with that world and with its thinking. What people think is a fact of the greatest political importance, even if they think wrongly, and it is therefore the duty of the University to see that this aspect of political truth is known. However, not only are these foreign students given little opportunity to speak, but they are often muzzled for fear of what they will say. It then becomes the duty of Christians to provide a platform for political discussion, not merely in a time of crisis, but continually until the University realizes its responsibilities. It may, therefore, sometimes be more important for the Church on the campus to organize political debates than for it to arrange Bible study. When one thinks, for instance, of the steady work done by the British Student Christian Movement in the years between the wars to see that the case for Indian independence was heard, or their efforts to bring the Egyptian argument at the time of Suez before the British public, or the courageous questioning of the French Christian students concerning Algeria, one can only be amazed at the political silence and even ignorance of the Christian student associations in this country.

It is insufficiently realized outside the campus what this kind of

witness costs. The professor who makes at a faculty meeting some accusation about college policy, the student who challenges the tyranny of his fraternity, anybody who does something which causes his college unfortunate publicity, or disturbs the trustees, requires great fortitude to stand up against the taunts of disloyalty and lack of wisdom that are made against him. Public opinion can be a suffocating thing.

But it is more than fortitude that he requires. There is also the actual ability to see where a protest is needed, and he is unlikely to have either of these if he does not stand within a community which is practicing this way of life as a matter of course. The Christians on the campus may be the Church-in-the-University, but they are not the whole Church, and they have their position only because they have come into the University from out of the community of the Church, and this community should pray for them, strengthen them, nourish them, and encourage them. To be the sacrament on the campus a Christian must himself be fed by Word and Sacrament and all that this implies. If the members of the parish to which he belongs say to themselves and their minister, "Speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (Isa. 30:10), they may not actually prevent him from making a stand, but they are making it very, very difficult. It is quite wrong to expect a student to make his lonely protest in his fraternity, if he attends a church where the congregation are people who will not make the same kind of protest in the world in which they move. It is entirely possible that the greatest contribution a minister can make to the welfare of the University is by giving his life to building up a community with this kind of insight and this kind of courage. But to do this, he must live this life and run these risks himself.

The Need for Integrity

Integrity, then, must be the watchword, for this is both an academic and a Christian quality, and in the name of this integrity many questions must be asked. Most especially must they be asked about whether there is today any integrity at all in those campus activities which are called "religious." The idea of Religious Emphasis Weeks (or Religion in Life Weeks or Intelligent Faith Weeks—call them what you will) has often been challenged on the grounds that it is absurd to spend only one week emphasizing what should be emphasized all the year, but this is a weak argument. A good case could be made out of giving special attention for some short period of the year to anything important. What most needs to be asked is whether within the framework of a Religious Emphasis Week the truth can be set forward at all. It is false for the University to pretend, as so frequently it does, that all religions are working towards a common goal, false because it is demonstrably untrue. It is false for the Church to allow herself to get into a position where she seems to suggest that "religion" and the Christian faith are the same thing. It is utterly false to suggest that there are three faiths, and that the Protestants include Christian Scientists and Mormons. There is, and can be, only one "Christian Faith," and Protestants have far more in common with Roman Catholics than they have with those who have either denied the Incarnation or added to it.

The whole atmosphere of a Religious Emphasis Week is only too often phoney, with the addresses sedulously placed in a framework of prayers and hymns or some other religious exercise. Such activities are false for two reasons: first because they suggest a Christian audience, and this denies the character of the University; second, because the role of the University is to instruct, to arrange honest lectures unconfused by pious trimmings. The Christian understanding is that the lecture itself is the offering to God. If it

is not so conceived, then no opening collect, no solo, no sacred music, no Gothic lettering will turn it into an offering; if it is so conceived, the garnishings of piety are unnecessary.

The present conception of the role of the student associations is also much open to question, for the assumption that Canterbury or the Westminster Foundation exist to satisfy the needs of Episcopalians and Presbyterians is a denial of the nature of the Church. It is highly questionable whether God is in any sense glorified by the multiplicity of student religious organizations on the campus. It would be wrong, certainly, to pretend to a unity of churches which does not exist, but it is equally wrong to deny the Christian unity which does exist. So anything in the nature of a "community church," which denies the existence of separate denominations, is false, but false also is the segregation of students into more or less isolated associations, with no common purpose between them. There should be more experimentation in real ecumenical debate on the campus than exists at present, and the official church bodies should display much less hesitancy about it than they do. Of course, there are dangers attached to such discussion, but in the academic world what does not contain a certain element of intellectual adventure is not worth doing.

What needs always to be condemned is the playing for safety which characterizes so many of the Christian student organizations. As long as a church is content that its student members shall form the inward-looking, unenterprising "fellowships" which so many of them do, it cannot ask that Christians in the loneliness of the campus arena shall be valiant for truth. It will not be producing the kind of people who are capable of it. Obviously, the minister in charge of a campus church needs to be superlative if there is to be this source of fire and strength, and here lies one of the difficulties. It is too common at the present time to imagine that the position of a college minister is one for a young man who will ultimately be called to a "proper" parish. Instead, it should be a missionary situation, where a man says, "I will give my life to

living in this strange country, learning its language, coming to know its people, living according to its customs. I will not ask to go home until God sends me." Such a man should be intellectually outstanding, strong in the spiritual life, capable of entering deeply into the thinking of those who differ widely from himself.

Such men are not easily found, nor do all the necessary virtues often cohere in one single man. There is therefore strong reason for thinking that the Christian witness to the vast universities of modern America needs a community, composed of both clergy and laymen. Among such a group the regular worship of the Church would be offered day by day on behalf of the whole university, and instruction by means of lectures and study circles would be given. There would be no one meeting to which all would be asked to come, but several series, e.g., one for freshmen on alternate Sundays, an advanced seminar for seniors once a month, faculty discussions, and faculty-student groups. There would be a library, and the reading of serious books would be required of all. It would be a place where members of the University might "go in and out, and find pasture." Some of the community might be fulltime teachers or students on the campus; those who were not would need patiently to come to know the University on its own terms, and be ready, if necessary, to spend years in the process.

We hover today on the very outskirts of the problem. Patience, humility, study, dedication, and sanctity are required of every person who tries to wrestle with it. There is no substitute for these things, and there are no short cuts. We must be prepared to labor and let others enter into our labor. There may be much dispute about the aims and methods, but about the difficulty there can be no argument. Those who present "college work" in any simpler terms do both Truth and the Gospel a disservice.

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